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64

magazine

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REALLY, 007?

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The Games



DIDDY KONG RACING



GOLDENEYE



SUPER MARIO 64

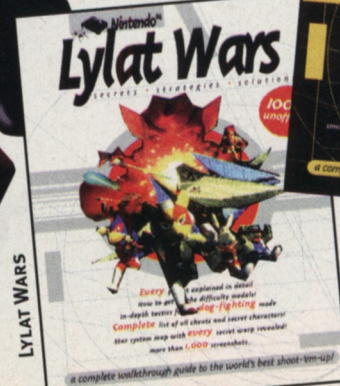


MARIO KART 64

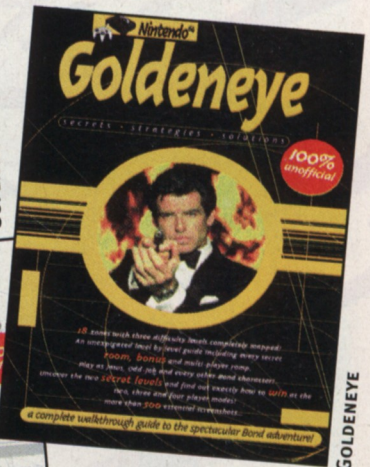
The Books



SUPER MARIO 64



LYLAT WARS



GOLDENEYE

Turn to page 94 to subscribe!



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volume nine

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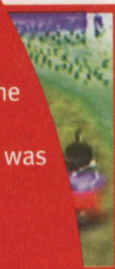
magazine

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No need for a boring bloke next to you droning "Long easy left, long right" with our *Top Gear Rally* maps!



N⁶⁴ Welcome!

SPACED OUT

WELL I'M BACK FROM JAPAN, HAVING ATTENDED NINTENDO'S SPACE WORLD SHOW, AND I HAVE TO ADMIT I HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT WHAT I SAW. ON THE ONE HAND, NINTENDO'S OWN TITLES WERE SPECTACULAR. ON THE OTHER HAND, A LOT OF THE THIRD PARTY GAMES WERE AVERAGE AT BEST, AND NINTENDO'S GREAT CHARCOAL-GREY HOPE, THE 64DD, HAS NOW BEEN DELAYED UNTIL AT LEAST THE SUMMER.

THE SHOW MARKED AN APPARENT SEA CHANGE IN NINTENDO'S APPROACH TO GAMING, CERTAINLY IN JAPAN. HIROSHI YAMAUCHI'S KEYNOTE SPEECH SET A DIRECTION FOR HIS COMPANY THAT SEEMS RADICALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE. STRAIGHTFORWARD GAMES AS WE KNOW THEM ARE OUT; "NURTURING AND TRADING" TITLES ALONG THE LINES OF THE TAMAGOTCHI-ESQUE *POCKET MONSTERS* AND ACTIVITY PACKAGES LIKE THE *MARIO ARTIST* SERIES ARE IN.

THIS CHANGE MAY ONLY APPLY TO JAPAN; THE N64 HAS BEEN SURPRISINGLY WEAK OVER THERE, AND NINTENDO ARE OBVIOUSLY KEEN TO RECAPTURE THEIR HOME MARKET FROM SONY BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE STRENGTH OF THE *POCKET MONSTERS* BRAND. HOWEVER, WHILE THE JAPANESE AND WESTERN MARKETS MAY BE DIFFERENT, THEY'RE NOT THAT DIFFERENT, AND NINTENDO'S GAMES HAVE UNTIL NOW BEEN DESIGNED TO HAVE A WORLDWIDE APPEAL. HOW EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN GAMERS ANXIOUS TO PLAY THE NEXT *MARIO* OR *STARFOX* OR *GOLDENEYE* WILL TAKE TO THE EXTREMELY JAPANESE *POCKET MONSTERS* REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

IT'S CLEAR THAT NINTENDO SEE THEIR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE RESTING ON THE 64DD, SINCE THEIR ONLY CONFIRMED CARTRIDGE GAME BEYOND *F-ZERO X* IS *POCKET MONSTERS PIKACHU*. ALL NINTENDO'S OTHER NEWLY-ANNOUNCED TITLES – IN FACT, THE BULK OF THEIR CONSIDERABLE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES – ARE HEADED FOR THE 64DD. THIS ISN'T ESPECIALLY GOOD NEWS FOR UK GAMERS, AS THE ADD-ON WON'T APPEAR HERE UNTIL AT LEAST SPRING 1999, IF IT EVEN APPEARS AT ALL. THIS LEAVES THE N64'S CARTRIDGE DEVELOPMENT BASE IN THE HANDS OF SECOND-PARTY COMPANIES LIKE RARE – WHO FOR ALL THE EXCELLENCE OF THEIR PRODUCT ARE MUCH SMALLER THAN NINTENDO, AND THEREFORE CAN'T PUT OUT NEARLY AS MANY GAMES – AND THE THIRD-PARTY DEVELOPERS, WHOSE QUALITY RANGES FROM GOOD TO ABYSMAL. HOW WILL THE N64 FARE WITHOUT THE SECURITY OF NINTENDO'S OWN GAMES?

OF COURSE, NINTENDO UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE OTHER CARTRIDGE GAMES IN DEVELOPMENT THAT THEY HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET. BUT IT IS A BIT WORRYING THAT THE COMPANY HAS SWITCHED EMPHASIS SO SHARPLY, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT'S THE WESTERN, NOT JAPANESE, MARKET WHERE THE N64 IS A ROARING SUCCESS. WITH THE N64 IN JAPAN STRUGGLING TO KEEP PACE WITH EVEN THE SATURN, INSTEAD OF TRYING TO SAVE FACE AT HOME, WOULDN'T NINTENDO BE BETTER OFF GOING WHERE THE MONEY IS?

Andy McDermott, editor

the 64 showcase

news
peripherals
advice • hot new
items of interest



TOMORROW DIES!

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT A GAME BASED ON JAMES Bond's latest adventure, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, won't be appearing on the N64 – MGM Interactive will be

releasing the game, developed by Black Ops, on PlayStation only. Boo! The good – hell, the excellent! – news is that the bit at the end of *Goldeneye*'s credits where it says 'James Bond will return' did refer to the N64!

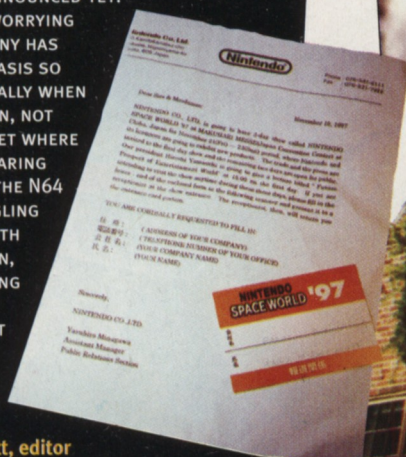
Although Rare have as yet released no specific details – regular readers will know just how tight-lipped Rare can be about their projects – they have confirmed that work is already under way on a sequel to what we here at 64 MAGAZINE reckon is possibly the most playable videogame ever! Chris Stamper, one of the founders of Rare, has been



THE NEWS ABOUT A NEW BOND GAME RAISED A FEW EYEBROWS.



RARE TOWERS, HOME OF SOME VERY SECRETIVE PEOPLE.





Sell, Sell, Sell!

SALES FIGURES FOR VARIOUS CONSOLES,

compiled by Japanese magazine *Famitsu*, show that the N64 has developed a rather schizophrenic sales pattern. Between March and September 1997, the N64 sold a mere 400,000 units in Japan, compared to the same number of Saturns and a staggering two million PlayStations.

Outside Japan, though, the numbers are very different – nearly six million N64s were shifted in the West over the same six months, against 4.4 million PlayStations and a paltry 200,000 Saturns.

This brings the total number of N64s sold as of last September up to an impressive 11.5 million, against 20 million PlayStations – and Sony's machine has been around for a lot longer. Considering how popular the machine is in the West, maybe Nintendo would be better

off concentrating on that market instead of attempting to recapture Japan by announcing games and accessories that won't be available for at least another six months?



Showcase

Manga Mania

WITH SUCH A HEAVY EMPHASIS ON ALL THINGS JAPANESE THIS ISSUE, WHAT WOULD 64 MAGAZINE'S ILLUSTRIOUS STAFF LOOK LIKE RENDERED IN MANGA FORM? BLOODY HIDEOUS, AS IT TURNS OUT.

ANDY McDERMOTT

The editor has been telling anyone who'll listen about his trip to Japan. This year, he's hoping to attend a convention in Bermuda. Any convention.



ROY KIMBER

The man with no musical taste recently attempted to learn Japanese, in the hope of figuring out what all those import game options screens are talking about!



NICK TRENT

He's got a fetish for Pot Noodles and plays the *Akira* soundtrack a lot, which in our Ryvita-chowing designer's mind qualifies him as almost being Japanese himself!

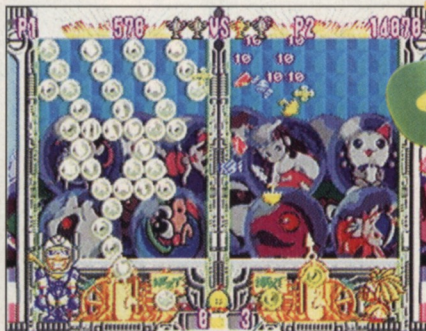


KEEP BUSTIN'!



EXCELLENT NEWS FOR FANS OF ARCADEY PUZZLE-TYPE GAMES – ACCLAIM WILL BE bringing the excellent *Bust-A-Move 3* to the N64 later this year! Known in Japan as *Puzzle Bobble*, the game involves firing coloured balloons so that they are grouped together by colour and disappear – it's almost a helium-filled version of *Puyo Puyo* (see last issue), and is just as much fun!

Acclaim will also be putting out another puzzle-style game this year, but at the moment they're being tight-lipped about its content, other than that it comes from the team that brought you *Turok*. Still more mysterious is another game from *Turok* developers Iguana, described by a source at Acclaim as "hard to describe". That's helpful! Apparently it's an arcade/platform game with weird puzzle overtones, so we look forward to more details nearer its planned May launch.



Snowbow Tie

ATLUS'S AMUSING CARTOON snowboarding romp, *Snowbow Kids*, has been snapped up by THE Games for its British release. The four-player plankathon will be coming out in March, at an expected price of £54.99. Rad, dudes.

Pro Plus

KONAMI'S UPCOMING BASKETBALL GAME *NBA IN THE ZONE '98* is undergoing a switch of moniker, morphing T1000-like into *NBA Pro '98*. This is to keep it in line with Konami's other sports games, all of which will now be part of the *Pro* series. It shouldn't change the playability any – from what we saw at the Space World show in Japan, whatever it's called, it's still rather a hoop dream...



A-Z You Like It

IF YOU'RE A GAMES COMPLETIST AND THE CAPSULE summaries in the Nindex just aren't enough to feed your ravening appetite for information, you might be interested in *The Complete A-Z Of 64 Games*. From the same people who bring you 64 MAGAZINE, TCAZO64G (snappy, huh?) is a compilation of all 64 MAGAZINE's reviews up to issue seven. Well, almost all – *NBA Hangtime* got the bum's rush for some reason. And Loz Cooper and Ryan Butt want to know why they weren't listed as contributors as well. But apart from that, if you want to get all the stuff contained in the increasing number of sold-out issues of 64 MAGAZINE, this is the mag to buy! *The Complete A-Z Of 64 Games* is out now, and costs £4.95. G'wan, wash the strength back in.

Now THAT'S Magic!

AND HOPEFULLY THAT'S THE LAST TIME THERE WILL EVER BE an allusion to Paul Daniels in the pages of this magazine. What is magic is the news that Konami, they of multiple news pieces this issue, have grabbed the UK rights to Imagineer's promising RPG *Holy Magic Century Eltale* – and it will now be appearing under the almost complete name of *Holy Magic Century*, rather than the short-but-dull *Quest 64* it'll be adopting in America.

Konami pulled off quite a coup to get *HMC* – normally Ocean handle Imagineer's products over here, but after seeing a preview version of the game and recognising a potential winner, Konami's European division hurriedly opened their chequebooks. Nice work, chaps! *Holy Magic Century* will be out this spring, once it's been translated into English.



HEEEERE'S GOEMON!

KONAMI ARE GETTING READY TO release *Ganbare Goemon* (issue five, 70%) in the UK in March.

The title is being changed, however; because a German company has copyright on the Goemon name in Europe, the game will now be called *Mystical Ninja Starring Goemon*. Unlike previous *Mystical Ninja* games on the Super NES, this time it won't be Westernised (yep, Kid Ying and Doctor Yang have been banished forever) – Konami are keen to keep as much of the original's wacky Japanese flavour as possible. Five years of stuff from Manga Video has finally brought the anime style into the mainstream! The Japanese songs from *Ganbare Goemon* will also be kept, complete with English subtitles, so the cart will weight in at a hulking 128Mbits. No word on a price yet, but we'll let you know as soon as possible!



N64 IN CHAINS!



Showcase

How's this for some damn cool stuff? Fire International have picked up the UK rights to these excellent officially licenced N64 accessories. £7.99 will get you a keychain/watch in the shape of either an actual N64 or a controller in any of the six official colours, and £9.99 nets you an N64 voice memo keychain – speak into it, and it can record your burlblings to be played back at will!

The multitudinous keychains will be available from all good game stores, but 64 MAGAZINE has got a complete set – N64, six joypads (one in each colour) and an N64 voice memo – to give away to one trouser-detonatingly privileged winner, courtesy of Fire International! There's just one unhard question to answer, and here it is:

Q: WHICH COMPANY MAKES THE N64?

Answers that begin with the letter S will be instantly binned to preserve the gene pool! Send your response to *Keys Are Good compo*, 64 Magazine, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS to arrive before January 29. The first correct answer plucked from the metaphorical hat will win the full array of chronographic keychains!

Do THE MAGS

Since this issue has a very Japanese flavour to it, we thought you might be interested to see what N64 mags on the Pacific Rim are like! Compared to Britain's hefty helping of six different Nintendo titles, it's a surprise that Japan can only manage three, despite having a much larger population and, even considering the N64's poor showing up against the PlayStation, a larger user base.

Where British mags are review-based, the Japanese contingent rely enormously on previews – reviews were given a mere three pages in *Dengeki Nintendo 64*, and as far as I could tell were absent entirely from *The 64 Dream* and *Famimaga 64*! On the other hand, if you want interviews with game developers these magazines will suit you just fine. The issue of

Famimaga 64 I picked up has a huge '100 Questions' interview with Shigeru Miyamoto about *Zelda 64*, which had already been translated and put on the Net by the time I returned to England. Expect to see it plagiarised on a news-stand near you soon!

All three mags have a similar look, cramming tiny screenshots into breathlessly lurid pages and filling out their black-and-white sections (unlike the UK mags, none of the Japanese titles are full colour) with reader art. It does have to be said that the quality of reader art in Japan is infinitely higher than you get over here...

- *The 64 Dream*: 164 pages, 490 yen
- *Famimaga 64*: 100 pages, 590 yen
- *Dengeki Nintendo 64*: 156 pages, 590 yen



Bunch Of Arse

This was spotted in *Dengeki Nintendo 64* – from the look of things, it's a superhero called something like Anal Man! We won't even comment, other than to note that it has a '© Capcom' tagline. Let's hope this isn't their N64 debut game...



This Ain't THIR

LAST ISSUE HAD QUITE A FEW GLITCHES (not all Nick's fault!), due mainly to the fact that Andy had to jet off to Japan before the magazine was finished, and therefore couldn't check it. This gave rise to oddities like the entirely irrelevant appearance of a picture of a steering wheel in the Logic 3 compo, some very curious captions and the incredible mirror world fiasco that was the Gizmos & Gadgets page! Normal service has now been resumed. Nothing can possibly go

worngggg.

64

NEWS & GUGGETS

GOLDENEYE HAS NOW SOLD OVER A MILLION COPIES – EXPECT MUCH POPPAGE OF CHAMPAGNE CORKS AT RARE'S HQ DEEP IN RURAL WARWICKSHIRE... IN FACT, THE ENTIRE STAFF OF RARE WILL PROBABLY BE GETTING ROYALLY PISSED UP ON KRUG, AS DIDDY KONG RACING WILL ALSO HAVE HIT THE MAGIC MILLION BEFORE CHRISTMAS... HUDSON SOFT HAVE CANCELLED AN N64 RPG – A DETECTIVE STORY CALLED KINDAICHI SHONEN NO JIKENBO – THAT THEY WERE WORKING ON. BUT THEY BROUGHT US DUAL HEROES INSTEAD. GEE, THANKS GUYS... MIDWAY AND ATARI GAMES ARE WORKING ON A SEQUEL TO SAN FRANCISCO RUSH, REVIEWED THIS ISSUE, TO APPEAR AT THE END OF THE YEAR... CAPCOM'S FIRST THREE N64 GAMES WILL APPARENTLY BE GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS 64, ROCKMAN 64 AND AN AS YET UNTITLED RACING GAME. BUT WHERE THE HELL IS STREET FIGHTER 64?... RIBBIT! HASBRO ARE PLANNING TO CONVERT THEIR PLAYSTATION FROGGER UPDATE, RELEASED IN THE UK BY SONY, ONTO THE N64...

BUDGET BONANZA

Okay, so maybe it's stretching the definition of the word 'budget' to its breaking point, but February will see the appearance of two cut-price N64 games in the UK, courtesy of THE Games. *Tetrisphere*, the rather nifty

puzzle game that we rate at 75%, will dance merrily onto the shelves at the wallet-friendly price of £39.99, a full tenner cheaper than even Nintendo's own games. The downside is that joining it at an identical price point

will be the truly horrid *Cruis'n USA*, which could only scrape a pitiful 25% out of our scoring barrel. Still, you can't have everything.



LATEST RELEASE DATES

Yes, we know it's all rather vague, especially for the UK. The problem is that at the time of writing, even the software companies aren't sure what's being released

when! As soon as we get confirmed dates we'll let you know, but until then you'll have to make do with peering through the mists of the future...

UK

January-March

Yoshi's Story (Nintendo)
Snowbow Kids (THE Games)
Tetrisphere (THE Games)
Cruis'n USA (THE Games)
Conker's Quest (Rare)
Forsaken (Acclaim)
Bust-A-Move 3 (Acclaim)
NHL Breakaway '98 (Acclaim)
Goemon (Konami)
GASP (Konami)
Nagano Winter Olympics (Konami)
NBA Pro '98 (Konami)
Castlevania 64 (Konami)
Holy Magic Century (Konami)
Virtual Chess 64 (Titus)
Twisted Edge Snowboarding (Kemco)
Tonic Trouble (Ubi Soft)
Mace: The Dark Age (GT Interactive)
MK Mythologies (GT Interactive)
San Francisco Rush (GT Interactive)
Quake 64 (GT Interactive)
Wayne Gretzky '98 (GT Interactive)
Mission: Impossible (Ocean)
Wetrix (Ocean)

April-onwards

Banjo-Kazooie (Nintendo)
Zelda 64: The Ocarina Of Time (Nintendo)
Forsaken (Acclaim)
"Iguana's puzzle game" (Acclaim)
Fighter's Destiny (Ocean)

JAPAN

January-March

Banjo And Kazooie (Nintendo)
Conker's Quest (Rare)
NBA Pro '98 (Konami)
GASP (Konami)
Holy Magic Century Eltale (Imagineer)
Snowspeeder 64 (Imagineer)
Flights of the UN (Video System)
Wayne Gretzky's 3-D Hockey '98 (Gamebank)
Super Robot Spirits (Banpresto)
Augusta: Masters '98 (T&E Soft)
Legion X (Hudson Soft)
Macross: Another Dimension (Tomy)
Bio Tetris (Amtex)
Sonic Wings Assault (Video System)

April-onwards

Zelda 64: The Ocarina Of Time (Nintendo)
F-Zero X (Nintendo)
Kirby's Air Ride (Nintendo)
NBA Basketball (Nintendo)
(64DD) Mario Artist (Nintendo)
(64DD) Mother 3 (Nintendo)
(64DD) Pocket Monster 64 (Nintendo)
(64DD) Sim City 64 (Nintendo)
(64DD) Jungle Emperor Leo (Nintendo)
(64DD) Sim Copter (Nintendo)
Street Fighter 64 (Capcom)
Ghouls 'n' Ghosts 64 (Capcom)
Rockman 64 (Capcom)
"Biohazard 64" (Capcom)
"Disney puzzle game" (Capcom)
"Racing game" (Capcom)
Fighting Cup (Imagineer)
Rev Limit (Seta)

USA

January-March

Yoshi's Story (Nintendo)
Conker's Quest (Rare)
Banjo-Kazooie (Nintendo)
Body Harvest (Nintendo)
MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr (Nintendo)
Nagano Winter Olympics '98 (Konami)
GASP (Konami)
NBA Pro '98 (Konami)
Bio Freaks (Midway)
Quake 64 (Midway)
NHL Breakaway '98 (Acclaim)
NBA Jam '98 (Acclaim)
WWF '98 (Acclaim)
Quest 64 (THQ)
Tonic Trouble (Ubi Soft)
Virtual Chess 64 (Titus)
Earthworm Jim 3 (Interplay)
Mission: Impossible (Ocean)
Sim City 2000 (Maxis)
Robotron 64 (Crave)

April-onwards

Zelda 64: The Ocarina Of Time (Nintendo)
Castlevania 64 (Konami)
Freak Boy (Virgin)
Turok 2 (Acclaim)
Forsaken (Acclaim)
Robotech: Crystal Dreams (Gametek)

SPINE TINGLER

ADMITTEDLY IT MAKES YOU LOOK AS IF you've legged it out of a game of Quasar without stopping to de-vest, but the Interactor adds a new twist to Rumble Pak games. It doesn't just shake your controller – it shakes your whole body!

Previously available for other machines at a rather pricey £80, Datel have taken over the strap-on gadget, given it N64 compatibility and cut the price to a decidedly more healthy £24.99.

On other machines, the Interactor shook its funky stuff whenever there was a loud noise, but the N64 version more sensibly only goes into vibe mode when told to by Rumble Pak games. Roy (seen here modelling the device) was of the opinion that it was fine for racing games, shaking appropriately whenever the car crashed, and *Goldeneye*, letting you feel every red-hot bullet penetrating Bond's soft flesh. He did have the proviso that extended use would probably make you feel sick – the vibrating section sits right against the back of your stomach!

The N64 version of the Interactor should be available from game shops, or you can call Datel for details on (01785) 810800.



64 CHARTS

ChartTrack

NO.	GAME	PUBLISHER
1	GOLDENEYE	NINTENDO
2	DIDDY KONG RACING	RARE
3	MARIO KART 64	NINTENDO
4	LYLAT WARS	NINTENDO
5	SUPER MARIO 64	NINTENDO
6	TOP GEAR RALLY	THE GAMES
7	ISS 64	KONAMI
8	BOMBERMAN 64	NINTENDO
9	F1 POLE POSITION 64	UBISOFT
10	SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE	NINTENDO
11	DUKE NUKEM 64	GT INTERACTIVE
12	MRC	OCEAN
13	WAVE RACE 64	NINTENDO
14	EXTREME G	ACCLAIM
15	TUROC: DINOSAUR HUNTER	ACCLAIM
16	FIFA 64	EA SPORTS
17	NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '98	ACCLAIM
18	CLAYFIGHTER 63 1/3	INTERPLAY
19	KILLER INSTINCT GOLD	NINTENDO
20	DOOM 64	GT INTERACTIVE

11

Mini Gizmos & Gadgets

NitroVibe+

\$14.99 • ACTLABS • 604 278 3560

THE MYSTERIOUS ACTLABS, WHO SENT US SOME STUFF LAST ISSUE WITHOUT telling us where we could get them, have turned out to be Canadian, not American. Our apologies to those under the maple leaf flag, ey?

The NitroVibe+ is a Rumble Pak clone which includes a 256K memory card, much like the Jolt Pak reviewed last issue. A small switch selects either rumble or memory mode – you can't use both at the same time, but since that's how Nintendo designed their own Paks it's not a problem.

The NitroVibe+ does what it says on the tin – it's not quite as smooth as Nintendo's Rumble Pak, but it still shakes its booty with the best of them. Since we don't know the UK price we can't comment on its value for money, but the wired-up can ask Actlabs themselves at <http://www.actlab.com>.

64 MAGAZINE RATING:



SPACE CRAMMAGE HAS RELEGATED G&G TO THIS SMALL CORNER OF THE SHOWCASE THIS ISSUE, BUT WE'VE STILL GOT ENOUGH ROOM TO TELL YOU ABOUT A COUPLE OF NEW N64 PLUG-INS!

Mega Memory Card

£24.99 • BLAZE • (01302) 321905

OKAY, NOW THEY'RE TAKING THIS PISS! AN EIGHT MEG memory card? That's the equivalent of no fewer than 32 regular Controller Paks! Since they would set you back £479.68 it's actually quite a saving, but you'd need to be a rabid *Hexen* fan (is there any other sort?) to need that much game saving space!

Unlike Datel's 4 Meg card, reviewed in issue six, the Mega Memory Card is made up of 32 separate memory banks rather than being one continuous lump of RAM. A small button on the back of the card switches through the 32 banks, so if you can't remember which bank you saved your *Duke Nukem* games to you could be in for quite a bit of scrolling through the N64's memory manager. Well-organised people, however, shouldn't have any problems, and even if you own every game on the N64, with the Mega Memory Card you shouldn't need to buy any more memory cards for a long time!

64 MAGAZINE RATING:





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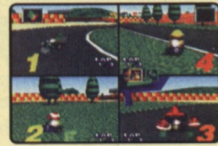
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Shadows of the Empire



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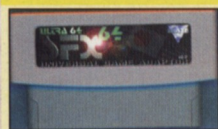
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When I'm

64



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Those **LETTERS** just keep on flooding in, no matter how rude Andy gets about some of them. Which is **GOOD** – it'd be a pretty crap letters page **OTHERWISE!** There's no Memory Card Losers this issue – normal service will be **RESUMED** as soon as we get some really **STUPID** post...

64 MAGAZINE, in association with Fire International, is pleased to announce a little incentive for our readers to get involved with the magazine – every letter printed (well, apart from the dongers that end up in Memory Card Losers) will win a 256K memory card from Fire, and a Star Letter each month will be crushed by largesse!

• Please note that the prizes are sent out by Fire International, not us, so there may be a delay between publication of your letter and receipt of your prize.

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KIM WU'S SEX LIFE

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I could start this letter with the usual praise, like how in the value for money department it soars way above the other magazines and how it has enough detail to let us know which games are a definite no-no without boring us to death and that I've been a dedicated reader since issue one, blah blah blah, but I won't. I'm sure that everyone's sick of reading this at the beginning of every letter, so I'm going to get straight to the point, no beating about the bush. So here goes:

- 1: I've noticed that the PlayStation can have video footage; is the N64 capable of video footage and if not, why not?
- 2: How many megs exactly will the 64DD cartridges be able to hold, and will they be able to have video footage?
- 3: After Christmas, could you mention how many N64s are owned as opposed to PlayStations and Saturns?
- 4: What console(s) do you own?
- 5: Do you really think the choice of cartridge over CD was a good one (honestly)?
- 6: Has Kim Wu (*Killer Instinct Gold*) got a boyfriend?
- 7: Is it true the N64 will be reduced to £49.99 after Christmas, if yes, why?

RYAN PAYNE, EASTLEIGH

Hmm, 92 words of not beating about the bush. Interesting. Anyhoo...

1: If you're thinking of long video sequences, as in *Tomb Raider*, then no – the N64's carts just don't have enough memory to include them. You can have small clips of video – *Wheel Of Fortune* will apparently have snippets of Vanna White in a picture window – but lengthy scenes are out. However, you can have long animated sequences using the in-game graphics (as in *Goemon* and *Zelda*), which in some ways is better because it doesn't take you 'out' of the game.

2: Erm, 64, and yes, in theory.

3: Soon as we find out.

4: Me personally? Let's see... a Game Boy, a Super NES, a Mega Drive, a (ahem) Jaguar, a PlayStation and a Saturn, plus a PowerMac. No N64? Come on, there are three in the office I can use whenever I want!

5: Hard to say. Carts have definitely kept prices high and deterred publishers from developing from the machine, but after *Goldeneye*'s instant loading even a 15 second wait for a *Tomb Raider* level to appear is annoying. Cartridges are approaching their limits though, because as they get bigger they become prohibitively expensive. If the machine that Nintendo

eventually develop to replace the N64 uses carts, I'll be surprised.

6: If you believe the pornographic fan-drawn pictures of her on the Internet, then yes!

7: Not that we know of.

RUDE BOY

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I am writing about the things that you do and don't write about in your magazine. For starters you don't even have a cheats page which is very bad, all you do is be bloody spiteful [sic – Ed] and tell us lads 'n' lasses what to buy, that ain't what a [sic again – Ed] want to see, fair enough, you gave out a cheats book in issue seven but that's no good, I bought *Pro 64*'s magazine and they've got cheats and tips page, a news page telling what these fake N64s are about and stuff like that and they even tell ya if there's any computer events on, but not you, no, you tell us what to buy and what not to buy. I'd say *Pro N64* was the best-selling N64 magazine, not you.

MICHAEL GREENHAM, WHITLEY BAY

PS: I will be hoping to see an improvement in your next volume so until next time...

He then flips us the bird. Charming.

Actually, we do have a cheats page. We've got a news page as well. Lifestyle hint: you have these things on the front of your head called 'eyes'. You might try using them once in a while!

YES, IT'S REAL

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

What in the name of Banjo-Kazooie do you think you're playing at? After reading your subscription page at the back, I saw in tiny letters that with every one year subscription of your brilliant magazine, you also receive a free 256K memory card. It's the offer of the year! I worked out that if you bought 12 issues of 64 MAGAZINE and a 256K memory card separately it would cost about £60, which means us readers save a massive £30, half the retail price! Why do you keep it such a secret? Tell the whole world! I'm going to start subscribing as soon as I get next month's pocket money!

MAYUR PANT, OXFORD

Jeez, how much pocket money do you get?

We've got an even better offer now, of course – check out page 94. And do you *really* live on Squitchey Lane? I know Oxford's a weird old town, but still...

LOVELY SUPER SMASHING

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

After completing *Zelda: A Link To The Past* on the Super NES I was 'allowed' by my girlfriend to buy an N64, which so far seems to be an excellent machine. I'm looking forward to the release of the new *Zelda* game – will it be on a normal cartridge or do I have to fork out another great wodge of cash for one of those bulky drive unit things?

So far I only have *Super Mario 64* and *Mario Kart 64*, and my one



PLAYSTATION NATION

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I am re-subscribing to your magazine, as I have been impressed with the quality of it and the in-depth honest reviews since the very first issue. However, in the last two issues I have noticed how you seem to be becoming more like *Official Nintendo Magazine*, filling page space with large rendered pictures as opposed to your normally large, in-depth and witty reviews and previews. Your preview and review of *Diddy Kong Racing* are prime examples. Please remember the formula that made you the biggest-selling N64 magazine in the first place. Otherwise, complements on a great magazine.

Regarding the readers of your magazine, it seems from your survey that videogames are now appealing to a more mature audience. People seem to think that the new consoles are attracting older gamers. The truth is that these are the same people who have always played videogames. The children who were playing Spectrums and Commodore 64s 15 years ago are now 15 years older and have turned into adults. Games are not attracting more mature gamers, they are attracting the same people they always have!

Regarding the development of consoles, people are regularly complaining about how often they

have to upgrade their consoles; once every three or four years is the trend. Another advantage of cartridges suddenly becomes apparent; how do you extend the life of a CD-based machine? Answer: you can't, to upgrade you have to release yet another piece of hardware.

With cartridge-based machines, this is not the case. The life of the SNES was extended by almost two years by the FX chip and allowed it to compete in the early days against the 32-bit machines, only to be let down by a complete marketing blunder by THE Games when the N64 was released.

To release a machine at £250 against a marvellously successful PlayStation at only £130 was sheer stupidity. The marketing policy of THE Games has been absolutely awful. March 1st was allowed to pass without anyone outside the games magazine buying world actually knowing a new machine had been released. They have now tried to redeem themselves by reducing the price to first £150, and now £100, but this is still not enough. The reason PlayStation is still outselling N64 is marketing. Everywhere you look you see PlayStation; almost every single commercial break – PlayStation; every live TV sports event –



STAR Letter!

PlayStation;

the European Champion League – PlayStation. There's even a ride called PlayStation at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, for gawd's sake. You get my point?

Anyway, I'll get off my soap box and ask you a couple of questions. I know information about the 64DD is limited, but I hear the modem is confirmed, which will allow for online gaming and downloading games, but will it also allow for Internet browsing?

Next question: most Super NES classics seem to be getting the 64-bit upgrade; in my opinion, the most playable SNES game ever was *Super Tennis*. Do you know of any plans for *Super Tennis 64*?

ANDREW HAYHURST, LITTLEBOROUGH

Considering what style of game *Diddy Kong Racing* is, we felt that a more brash approach in its presentation was appropriate. Personally, I thought that issue seven had some of the best-looking stuff we've ever done (until now...).

You're right to some degree about ageing gamers – pretty much everyone who works on Paragon's console magazines can date their



gaming heritage back to the Spectrum and C64

days – but almost half of our readers are under 16. There's no way they were frittering away their youth playing *Manic Miner* and *Suicide Express*!

The 64DD is still, even after the Space World show, a largely unknown quantity. The presence of a modem hasn't been definitely confirmed, even in America; Nintendo Of America's people think there will be one, but there was not even a fleeting mention of modem capabilities in Japan. If it does have a modem, it might have browsing abilities, but since that would allow people to download porn into *Picture Maker* I'd expect a Nintendo-specific forum (like AOL) rather than straight Net access.

Dunno about *Super Tennis 64*, but Hudson Soft are working on *Let's Smash*, which isn't a cider-drinking sim but a tennis game.

criticism is the fact that they are a bit on the easy side. *Super Mario 64* is a great game and it was quite a challenge, but it wasn't that difficult – and, like *Super Mario World* on the Super NES, you didn't have to do everything there is to do to complete the game. The new *Mario Kart* is a fine, easy-going game but it doesn't seem as playable as the original Super NES game – and it's considerably easier. Like Mr Taylor (letters, issue 7) I grew up with 8-bit home computers and spent vast quantities of time moving stick men around a screen after waiting ten minutes for a game to load off a cassette (has anyone ever got past level 28 on *Chuckie Egg*?) and whilst today's games look impressive this is no substitute for good gameplay, or a challenge. Some of the games on the PlayStation seem to be little more than an excuse for the programmers to show how clever they are.

Anyway, here are some pointless questions you may be able to answer.

- 1: Why is everyone so obsessed with cheats – isn't it just a waste of money to spend 50-odd quid on a game and then just look up the solution in a magazine? Wouldn't a subtle 'hints and tips' page be better?
- 2: I've killed Bowser in *Super Mario Bros 1* and 3,

The Lost Levels, *Super Mario World* and now *Super Mario 64* – is he actually dead now or will he return in a new *Mario* game sometime?

3: Why is everything 'super' – Super Mario, Super Nintendo, etc – when was the last time anyone used the word 'super' in a normal conversation?

4: Don't you think that Princess Toadstool is a bit of a cow? After Mario rescues her in *Super Mario 64* all she does is bake him a cake! In previous *Mario* games the most he's got for his troubles is a peck on the cheek. You can't help feeling sorry for the little guy...

TIM SELLERS,
BOSCOMBE



Zelda 64 will be on cartridge, which is a bloody good job as if we waited for a 64DD version we'd probably never see it! I agree totally with your comments on *Mario Kart 64* – to me, it wasn't a patch on the SNES game, which I still play occasionally. *Mario Kart 64* is gathering dust in one of the office drawers right now...

1: People want 'em, we provide 'em.

2: Nah, there's no getting rid of him.

3: What a super question, I wish I could answer it in an appropriately super way!

4: Mario must be getting terribly frustrated by now. Maybe he wears those gloves because unsightly hair isn't restricted to his upper lip...

THE UNKINDEST CUT OF ALL

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

Even though I think the N64 is the best and most powerful console around, its image never seems to change. Nintendo seem to have a problem with anything which doesn't fall into line with their 'family' appeal. For example, do you think the PlayStation's version of *Duke Nukem* will be so attacked by censorship? It's understandable why Nintendo don't want all the original elements that the PC game had, but why do they tone it down so much that not even the nightclub is in the final game? If they're worried about angry mothers phoning in to complain, they should tell them that there is such a thing as a rating system and certificates. If *Resident Evil* manages to survive on the N64 in all its glory, it would be a brilliant success that would hopefully stretch the range of their appeal to gamers.

By the way, your magazine is excellent. Without doubt I think it's one of the best magazines about the N64 I've ever read.

MARCO RIZITELLI, SEVENOAKS

The irony about *Duke Nukem* is that even after it was brutally emasculated by Nintendo, it still got an 18 certificate! So even though only adults can buy the game, they're still not allowed to see nekkid babes or alcoholic drinks... Whaddya mean "one" of the best, anyway?



MUM/GAME/FREEZER INTERSECTION

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I recently purchased an N64 and with it *Super Mario*, *Wave Race* and *Lylat Wars*. I had saved up the money for months to buy the brilliant console. Last week I came home with a mate to play on it. To my amazement the games weren't there. I looked everywhere, but eventually gave up and opened the freezer for some ice cream. The games were in there and all three were cracked and didn't work. My mum's excuse was that they were in sunlight and had got very hot. How can I stop my mum doing this again? I have no money left, what can I do?

JOE COLE, BANSTEAD

Parents, eh? My mum once threw out my collection of early 2000ADs on the grounds that they were "out of date". I'd recommend insisting that she replace them as she broke them, and if she's not amenable to that put her hairdryer, jewellery and CD collection in the freezer to see how she likes it!

HIP TO BE SQUARE

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

Why do third party developers such as Gremlin and Squaresoft create games on the PlayStation rather than the N64? I owned a PlayStation for quite a while, and then when I saw games like *Mario 64* and

Wave Race decided to sell it and buy a Nintendo. I never thought that large development houses would not make games for, or at least convert to, the most powerful system, backed by the company with the greatest experience and videogames knowledge in the industry. Nintendo, if you want examples, look no further than immense games like *Final Fantasy VII*, *Wipeout*, the *Tomb Raider* series and the huge prospect that is *Actua Soccer 2*. These games are arguably the greatest in their fields and none of them are available on the console I forked out £250 for on its first day of release.

When I owned my Super NES, all the big games were either both on Mega Drive and the SNES, or just on the SNES. It seems as though Nintendo's marketing strategy of 'wait and see' didn't pay off this time. I have written to Nintendo a couple of times in an attempt to voice my opinions, but all I received were first a standard reply and then a rude letter trying to dissuade me from writing again.

Finally, on a brighter note, at least some companies have got it right with brilliant conversions like Konami's *ISS 64* and excellent games such as *Goldeneye* and *Bomberman*. Come on Squaresoft! Bring us N64 owners *Final Fantasy*. I feel ill when my PlayStation-owning friends have games like *Jonah Lomu Rugby*, *Wipeout 2097*, *Final Fantasy VII* and *Actua Soccer 2*, and I have to put up with only a handful of quality games. I don't have anything against Nintendo but just hope that they can attract some more developers before it's too late! Anyway, keep up the good work – at least 64 MAGAZINE is worth the asking price.

ANDRZEJ ZAMOYSKI, HAWKHURST

The sheer cost of making N64 games is one problem, as well as the memory limitations of cartridges – there is no way you could put what Square wanted to do with *Final Fantasy VII* onto a cart. Because Nintendo control cartridge manufacture, they set a minimum number of carts that have to be paid for in advance, which means we're talking well into six, even seven figures – and the risk is all the software company's. If the game doesn't sell, they're stuck with thousands of carts that they've already paid for! In fact, this recently happened with the Japanese version of a well-known game that was a hit in the West, but flopped badly in Japan – and where do you keep 100,000 unwanted carts? CDs are a lot cheaper to make and can be ordered in smaller numbers – if the game sells out and more are needed, a new batch can be produced in days rather than the months it takes for carts. Not surprisingly, a lot of companies who have become used to the PC and PlayStation market don't want to take the risk.

THE LAST, BEST HOPE FOR RPGs

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I'm sure you and the readers will agree with me when I say that Nintendo are the best in the business. They take their time making their new consoles but make up for it in sheer quality. You know when you flick on the console switch with a Nintendo game inside that 99% of the time you are

going to be playing a highly rated game.

But there is one area which their consoles seem to lack, and that is

strategy/adventure games. I hope this changes with the N64. I know that Nintendo are releasing two *Zelda* games (which look even more class than the SNES version), but it seems the other software producers for the N64 think Nintendo buyers don't have enough brain cells for these games. Even the PlayStation has got PC-style strategy/adventure games like *Resident Evil* and *Broken Sword*.

JOHN SHERIDAN, LIVERPOOL

PS: Do you know if there are any footy management games in the pipeline? I think *Championship Manager* should definitely be converted to the N64 or 64DD.

PPS: And stop taking the piss out of my name, I've heard all the *Babylon 5* jokes!

Imagineer's *Holy Magic Century Eltale* (which will be released over here by Konami) looks like it could be a more traditional RPG than *Zelda* – although it's got *Mario*-style roaming around of landscapes, combat appears to be a turn-based system in the manner that the Japanese prefer.

PS: None that we know of, and yes, *Champ Manager* should be converted.

PPS: A Vorlon told me that understanding is a three-edged sword. And how did you get out of the Bloody Big Hole?

WATERWORKS

DEAR 64 MAGAZINE,

I have the greatest dilemma of life as we know it. My friend said that the N64 and its games will stop being produced as it is not able to keep up with the sales of the PlayStation and Saturn. Surely this cannot be true? Please say it's not so. When he told me of this most terrible news I wanted to break down and cry. Ever since I bought this absolutely amazing games console my life has been filled with joy and happiness. Please confirm the mistake made by my friend.

AMAR, MANCHESTER (PLEASE SEND YOUR FULL ADDRESS!)

Since I want to get you off the emotional rollercoaster you've obviously boarded, I can assure you that your friend is indeed talking what we in the trade refer to as "utter bollocks". The N64 is going to be around for a long time yet!



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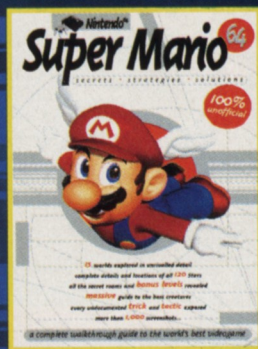


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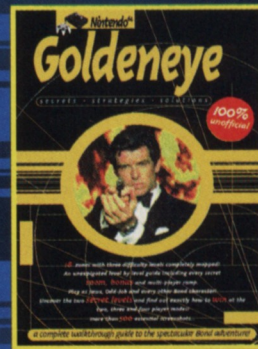
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64SIGHT

How much can we **SQUEEZE** into just **FOUR** pages this month? Plenty – as well as some 64DD games there wasn't **ROOM** for in our Japan **FEATURE**, we've also **MANAGED** to get a couple of **OTHERS** in as well!



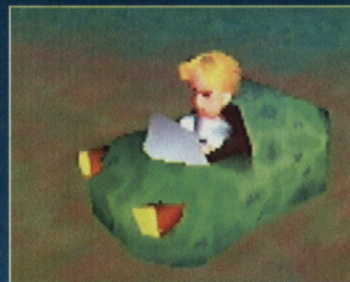
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MOTHER 3

NINTENDO • SUMMER (JAPAN) • 64DD

WITH THE 64DD DELAYED IN JAPAN again, until either April or June depending on who at Nintendo you talk to, the phrase 'eagerly awaited' in relation to *Mother 3* takes on an even more frenzied meaning than ever. Since the Japanese are mad for RPGs, *Mother 3* could be the killer app that helps sell the 64DD over there – that is, if *Pocket Monsters* doesn't get there first!



GUMBY AND HIS FAMILY FOUND THEIR FOREIGN HOLIDAY WASN'T ALL THEY'D HOPED FOR.

SUPER MARIO RPG

NINTENDO • SUMMER (JAPAN) • 64DD



AT FIRST GLANCE, THIS GAME LOOKS like a backward step for Nintendo – 2-D characters? On the 64DD? But the market Nintendo are hoping to capture with *Super Mario RPG* is the younger end of the scale, along with their barrage of *Pocket Monsters* games. Only video footage of the game was present at the Space World show, so we couldn't tell much about the way the game plays. From the look of the graphics, though, Mario's going to have to deal with some familiar old faces!

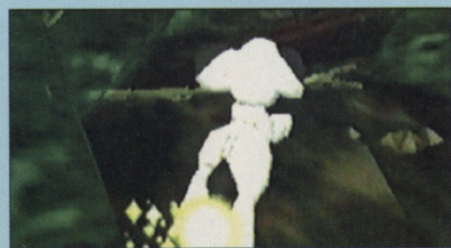


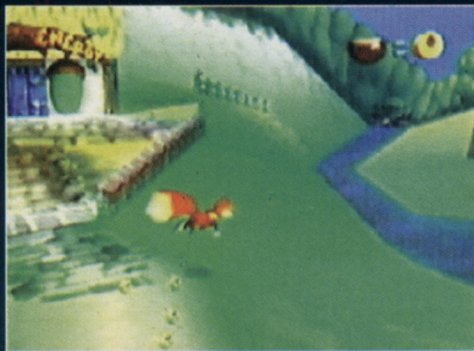
DENNIS HEALEY FOUND HIMSELF A NEW ROLE IN PANTO.

JUNGLE EMPEROR LEO

NINTENDO • TBA • 64DD

SHIGERU MIYAMOTO'S NEXT GAME SEEMS SET TO BE THIS ONE. FROM THE EARLY SHOTS HERE, it looks like a cross between *Mario 64* and *The Lion King*. *Jungle Emperor Leo* is apparently based on the anime *Kimba The White Lion* – we won't invite lawsuits from Disney by mentioning any alleged similarities between *Kimba* and the aforementioned *Lion King*! Apart from that, not a whole lot is known about it, and it doesn't look like the game will be out before the end of the year, so until more details are forthcoming you'll have to make do with these pictures of farting skunks and nice water ripples...





CONKER'S QUEST

RARE • SUMMER

RARE'S SQUIRRELY BABY WASN'T AT THE SPACE WORLD SHOW. WHY, WE DON'T know – because it was featured on Nintendo's promotional video, played on video walls at the event! Just for you, because we're kinda generous like that, here's an updated peek at the woody world of Conker!

Hats of different sorts seem to play a major part in the game, from the miner's helmet which illuminates dark underground passages to the cowboy hat, which has the unfortunate side effect of making Conker look like Garth Brooks. No wonder everything's out to get him! However, the bushy-tailed adventurer can defend himself by lobbing conkers at enemies, and he doesn't have to resort to baking them or dipping them in varnish to make the nuts into lethal weapons.

We'll be bringing you more on *Conker's Quest* nearer the time of the game's release, so until then, don't let your nuts get cold...



SORRY, CONKER, BUT ALL THE MINES CLOSED DOWN YEARS AGO.



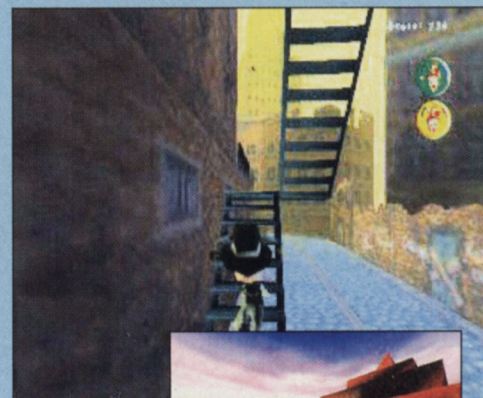
JEST

OCEAN • SUMMER 1998

JESTERS, EH? THEY WAVE BALLOONS ON STICKS AROUND, WEAR pointy shoes with bells on and get executed by bored kings. As an example of how often this happens, just think of Mr Claypole from *Rentaghost* and ask how long you'd put up with his stupid bearded face around your throne room.

British developers Curved Logic have nevertheless overcome this bad press and made a jester the hero of their upcoming game *Jest*. Jax is a trainee jester who has entered the bells-on-hats-related world of Humorous in the hopes of earning his stripy pantaloons by obtaining the 'Jest'. This job is made a bit more difficult than just falling over to get easy laughs – not only is Humorous full of other budding jesters who aren't keen on competition, but the ruler of this comedic domain, Tarot, has successfully prevented anyone getting their paws on the Jest for a couple of centuries. Can Jax overcome the forces of history (and his own incompetence) and win the Jest?

With the action taking place in a varied and bizarre 3-D landscape, full of atmospheric effects and devilish puzzles, *Jest* looks very promising even at this early stage. More soon!



NHL BREAKAWAY '98

ACCLAIM • MARCH

UNTIL NOW, THE ONLY NAME IN ICE hockey games has been EA Sports' *Wayne Gretzky* series. Now, however, Acclaim are planning to do for ice hockey what *NFL Quarterback Club* did for American football – take on and beat the established names at their own game!

Although it's a sister title to *Quarterback Club*, *NHL Breakaway* won't feature the same high-res graphics. This shortfall should be made up for by speed and bone-crunching action, and for those into the tooth-removing sport, all the NHL players are accurately modelled in the game, right down to their style of play.

Wayne Gretzky was popular around the office for its combination of speed, skill and extreme violence – we can't wait to find out whether *NHL Breakaway*, endorsed by Keith

Tkachuk of the Phoenix Coyotes (apparently he's rather good at the game), can do the same!



GO ON, STAMP ON HIS HEAD! KILL! KILL!





Do **WHAT?** Andy McDermott didn't **LUG** half a **HUNDREDWEIGHT** of camera gear 6,000 miles not to **USE** it! Here's the **COMPLETE** inside scoop on all the **GAMES** at Nintendo's Space World '97 show in **JAPAN** – complete with **ILLICIT** snapshots!



SPACE WORLD '97 WAS

Nintendo's showcase for all the upcoming N64 games and hardware – well, some of them, at least. Certain items were very conspicuous by their absence, but you can find out about these in the main feature.

Press day was comparatively quiet (the last two days of the show, when it

was open to the public, were hellishly crowded), which let me see that there weren't actually all that many games on show when it came down to it. Quite a lot of those that were were also Japan-only titles (I can't see *Irritating Electric Stick* getting a UK release any time soon), further cutting the numbers.

The real pain was Nintendo's 'no photography' policy, which to be honest I couldn't understand. Hello? This is press day, ne? And I'm the press, yeah? Providing a disk with screenshots on is one thing, but that only covers Nintendo's games – what about the others? Nintendo's one oh-so-magnanimous gesture to weary Western journos with rucksacks full of heavy camera gear was to allow general shots of the show hall, which pretty soon everyone was abusing by shooting screens with zoom lenses from 50 feet away and casually wandering past the stands with camcorders that just happened to be pointing at the monitors, so I decided

THE AIR-CONDITIONED SPLENDOR OF THE MAIN SHOW HALL. IT WAS A LOT MORE CROWDED ON THE OPEN-TO-THE-PUBLIC DAYS!



早見

"NO"

that there was no reason for me to feel left out. Strike a blow against The Man!

Even though the show hall was massive, only about a third of it was occupied by N64 stuff; the middle area was an auditorium and video wall marquee, the remainder being taken up with Game Boy paraphernalia. With a number of promised titles only appearing on video, the lineup seemed even thinner than anyone was expecting. Here for your viewing pleasure is the complete rundown of everything at Space World '97 – and some Michael Palinesque travel gubbins from our globetrotting editor!

Nintendo

Considering that it was their show, Nintendo's lineup was in some ways a disappointment. Yes, they had eagerly awaited games like *Zelda 64*, *Yoshi's Story* and *F-Zero X* on display in playable form. Yes, they announced more 64DD titles and additional experience-enhancing plug-in Paks. But the 64DD itself was still absent, on display only under glass and on video, and even one of the promised new Paks failed to materialise!

ZELDA 64

But let's start with the good stuff. The big game of the show, both in terms of advance expectations and the number of copies Nintendo had on display, was *Zelda 64: The Ocarina of Time* (or *TOOT* to its mates). The version on show was a limited-play

禁止 PHOTOGRAPHY

23

copy of the 70% completed game, with only a small selection of combat sections, simple puzzles, horse-riding bits and early bosses to look at. These were still enough to impress, though! There's an opening scene where the junior Link (there being two versions of the hero in the game – a child in the past and an adult in the present) witnesses a horsebound kidnapping and is menaced by the evil Ganon – a stunning piece of work which shows that you don't need CD-spoiled FMV to set a mood and tell a story. *Goemon* and *Diddy Kong Racing* hinted at the possibilities, but *Zelda 64* proves it beyond a doubt.

It's hard to judge how the game as a whole will play, because of the demo's emphasis on action scenes rather than exploration, puzzle-solving and character interaction, to

say nothing of the fact that what text there was within the game was – of course – all in Japanese. But it looks like Nintendo certainly got the action right!

Something so obvious that no-one ever noticed it before is that the coloured circles behind



MAKE NO MISTAKE, TOKYO IS BIG. FROM A HIGH VIEWPOINT LIKE THE TOKYO TOWER, THE CITY STRETCHES ALMOST TO THE HORIZON IN EVERY POSSIBLE DIRECTION, A VAST URBAN SPRAWL SEEMINGLY WITHOUT END. IF YOU TAKE THE TRAIN FROM THE CENTRAL UENO STATION TO NARITA AIRPORT, A TRIP OF JUST OVER AN HOUR, IT TAKES OVER 45 MINUTES BEFORE YOU'LL SEE ANYTHING RESEMBLING OPEN COUNTRYSIDE, AND EVEN THEN IT'S STILL SPATTERED WITH CLUSTERS OF BUILDINGS.

THE THING THAT REALLY STRIKES YOU EARLY ON IS HOW CLEAN IT IS COMPARED TO WESTERN CITIES. THERE'S THE INEVITABLE SMELL OF EXHAUST FUMES, THOUGH NO WORSE THAN YOU'D FIND IN LONDON, AND MOST OF THE TIME IT'S MASKED BY THE SMELL OF FOOD ANYWAY. DESPITE THERE BEING A RESTAURANT AT EVERY CORNER AND A VENDING MACHINE EVERY TEN PACES, THERE'S ALMOST NO LITTER. I COULDN'T WORK OUT WHY THIS WAS BECAUSE LITTER BINS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN, UNTIL I REALISED THAT THE LOCALS CARRY THEIR RUBBISH AROUND WITH THEM UNTIL THEY CAN DISPOSE OF IT!

GETTING AROUND IS FAIRLY EASY, ALTHOUGH THE FACT THAT TWO DIFFERENT COMPANIES – WITH DIFFERENT TICKETS – OPERATE THE SUBWAY SYSTEM IS A MAJOR PAIN IN THE ARSE, THE AUTOMATIC TICKET MACHINES DECIDING THAT YOU'VE HAD YOUR MONEY'S WORTH AND KEEPING YOUR TICKET EVEN WHEN YOU'VE STILL GOT ANOTHER LINE TO TRAVEL ON! TAKE NOTE, TONY BLAIR – PRIVATISING THE TUBE IS A CRAP IDEA. THE SUBWAY ITSELF IS CLEAN AND EFFICIENT, THOUGH THE MILES OF GLARINGLY LIT CORRIDORS FULL OF WARM, STALE, RECYCLED AIR DO MAKE YOU THINK YOU'VE WANDERED INTO SOME EARLY 1970S DYSTOPIAN SCI-FI FILM!

THE LASTING IMAGE YOU GET FROM TOKYO IS ONE OF SIGNS; IF THERE'S A SQUARE INCH OF SPACE SOMEWHERE ON THE OUTSIDE OF A BUILDING, SOMEONE'LL SLAP A GAUDY SIGN ON IT. IF THEY RUN OUT OF SPACE, THEY BUILD A BILLBOARD ON THE ROOF AND PUT MORE SIGNS ON THAT!

Tokyo





ZELDA 64: THE OCARINA OF

WITHOUT A DOUBT THE MOST IMPRESSIVE GAME AT THE SHOW. THOUGH THE VERSION OF THE GAME AT THE SHOW WAS ONLY A CUT-DOWN DEMO, IT STILL SHOWED THAT ZELDA 64 LOOKS SET TO BE THE MOST SPECTACULAR N64 GAME YET!

LINK'S FAIRY COMPANION IS CALLED NAVIE, AND SHE FLITS ABOUT HIS HEAD AS HE TRAVELS, WARNING HIM OF DANGER IN A JAPANESE VOICE SO HIGH-PITCHED THAT DOGS INVOLUNTARILY

LOSE BLADDER CONTROL. SHE CAN ALSO CARRY CERTAIN OBJECTS, FREEING UP LINK'S HANDS FOR THOSE ALL-IMPORTANT WEAPONS.

FIGHTING IS EXCELLENTLY DONE, LINK BEING ABLE TO SWITCH BETWEEN ATTACK AND DEFENCE IN AN INSTANT WITH THE DEFAULT SETUP. IF A MORE POWERFUL WEAPON LIKE A BROADSWORD IS NEEDED, LINK HAS TO USE BOTH HANDS — THIS CAUSES MORE DAMAGE TO



the icons on screen correspond to controller buttons. B (green) is an action button, used to open treasure chests, enter doors, talk to characters and the like; A (blue) brings up and uses the current weapon; and the lower three C buttons (yellow) use whichever items you've assigned to them, from boomerangs to bombs. R brings up Link's shield and Z locks the viewpoint, which is useful in combat as it lets you keep aiming at the enemy without the hassle of constantly adjusting to a circling viewpoint. Whenever the viewpoint is

locked, or Link is performing an action, borders crop the screen to give it a widescreen effect. There's no reason for it, other than it looks cool!

The monsters on show in the demo included killer plants (a lot like the Piranha Plants from *Mario 64*), giant lizards, skeletons, dinosaurs and a sort of piranha fish that swims through sand instead of water! Link can bring up his shield at any time to defend himself, a seamless action that makes fighting much more than just one side hacking away at the other — especially when Link's enemies have shields of their own!

Concerns that *Zelda 64* would turn out to be a *Tomb Raider* clone seem to

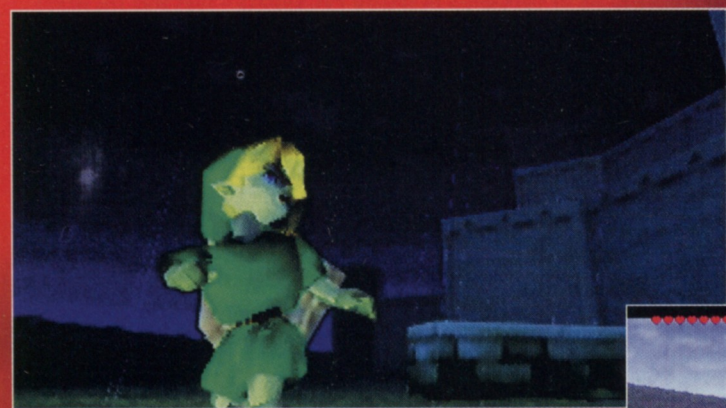
Space World Report



TIME

HIS OPPONENTS, BUT HE CAN'T USE HIS SHIELD!

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT *ZELDA 64* HAS BEEN DELAYED AGAIN, THE CURRENT RELEASE DATE NOW SCHEDULED FOR APRIL IN JAPAN. WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT JUST A LITTLE BIT LONGER FOR WHAT MIGHT BE THE MOST AMAZING VIDEOGAME OF ALL TIME...



be unfounded. Link has his fair share of climbing and jumping around, but he does it automatically when it's needed. No plunging into a pool of lava because you're a millisecond late on the jump button! The main problem facing players is knowing *where* to let Link do his stuff; because *Zelda 64* uses the N64's graphics in a 'realistic' way, the days of spotting obvious pathways and hidden doors are over, and you have to seek them out just

like in real life. An example I was shown was of a secret passage in a cave, which could be opened up with a bomb – if you didn't know of the possibility of secret passages, you'd probably think that the slight discolouration of a wall was nothing out of the ordinary. Once you get your mind into *Zelda* mode, though, these things begin to stand out.



Combat obviously plays a major part in the game. Using Link's shield and weapon is an extremely intuitive experience, the real trick to combat being to get into range of an enemy without letting them rip you to shreds. Locking the viewpoint with the Z trigger makes this a lot easier, so you just have to master the proper use of the analogue stick to make small precise steps and turns. Some of the creatures Link fights have fairly straightforward attack patterns

that leave them vulnerable at certain points, like the killer plants; if Link keeps his shield up while they dart forward and snap at him, there is a brief pause when they have to recover their strength and can be hacked with impunity. The more intelligent monsters obviously need more complicated tactics to defeat, though if all else fails, thrashing away madly with Link's sword can get in some licks!

Zelda 64: The Ocarina Of Time

certainly seems as though it's going to be superb when it's finished –

you can read my editorial this issue for my thoughts on how it could go down in Japan (where I suspect it might not receive quite the welcome it will in Europe and the US), but it's still impressive to note that though it had the most playable copies of any game at the show, it was still by far the hardest to get a go on – even when Nintendo president Hiroshi Yamauchi's keynote speech had largely emptied the other stands...

BANJO & KAZOOIE

It was rather easier to get a go on *Banjo & Kazooie's Great Adventure* (or *Banjo-Kazooie* as it'll be called over here), despite the efforts of a team of Japanese beauties in tight sweaters and PVC shorts to draw the

punters. (If you're wondering what they could possibly have to do with *Banjo & Kazooie*, they were all wearing little Banjo-style backpacks, though thankfully without crap redneck musical instruments. Hell, it was a good enough connection to get me over to the stand!)

The lack of attention wasn't because the game was *bad*, far from it. It looked and played like *Mario 64* on speed, with more detail, bigger landscapes, loads of amusingly characterised beasts (rampaging gorillas, short-sighted moles, raging bulls), bargeloads of special effects and plenty of neat touches involving the different abilities of the protagonists. The problem was... well, it looked and played like *Mario 64*! There may be differences in the specific details, but ultimately that's how it felt, which might explain why



BANJO & KAZOOIE

A BEAR, A BIRD, A GAGGLE OF CUTE GIRLS IN YELLOW PVC SHORTS – THAT WAS THE *BANJO & KAZOOIE* STAND! NOW NEARING COMPLETION, RARE'S SECOND-GENERATION MARIOALIKE IS LOOKING PROMISING, WITH A MUCH MORE LUSH AND SPRAWLING LANDSCAPE FOR THE TITULAR TWOSOME TO EXPLORE.

BECAUSE OF NINTENDO'S WRETCHED 'NO PHOTOGRAPHY' POLICY (I TRIED, BUT THERE SEEMED TO BE ABOUT THREE ATTENDANTS FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE PRESS, AND IT'S HARD TO REFUSE WHEN THE AFOREMENTIONED CUTE GIRLS POLITELY BUT FIRMLY INTERJECT THEMSELVES BETWEEN THE SCREEN AND YOUR LENS WITH A BOW AND A SINGSONG REQUEST OF "PLEASE, NO PHOTOGRAPH") I COULDN'T GET ANY SHOTS OF THE MORE INTERESTING-LOOKING LATER LEVELS, SO FOR NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH THE ONES FROM THE PRESS DISK. DOH! STILL, YOU CAN SEE IN ONE SHOT THAT KAZOOIE IS CARRYING BANJO – THIS IS VITAL IN SOME AREAS, AS BANJO IS CRAP AT CLIMBING HILLS, BUT KAZOOIE'S CLAWS LET HER SCUTTLE RIGHT UP THEM WITHOUT SLIPPING!





the Japanese contingent on press day didn't give it much attention. This was only after playing for a short time, admittedly, and there may be more distinctive stuff later on, but right from the start you can't help expecting one of the on-screen duo to shout "Mama mia!" when they get hit. As for the puzzles (collecting puzzle pieces is an integral part of the game), it remains to be seen how tricky they are – I got six pieces in only a few minutes, without even knowing what I was meant to be doing to get them!

The sound was also rather annoying, although to be fair that probably came from having a whole row of *Banjos & Kazooies* yelling and squeaking and farting next to each other all at once. On the plus side, the camera is an improvement over *Mario*, showing a bit more intelligence as it tries to keep Banjo and Kazooie in view while still showing the player what's ahead. Having the main characters able to defend themselves in different ways also expands the tactics of the game, as different enemies (and indeed different problems and obstacles) require varied techniques to get around. Ultimately, however, it was very hard to escape the feeling that *Banjo & Kazooie* was *Mario* redux.



YOSHI'S STORY

YAY FOR YOSHI! NINTENDO'S LATEST GAME WILL ACTUALLY HAVE BEEN OUT IN JAPAN FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS – DAMN THOSE DEADLINES, WE WANTED IT FOR THIS ISSUE! STILL, I'LL HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO PLAY IT PROPERLY OVER CHRISTMAS IN TIME FOR THE REVIEW NEXT ISH. WHO WANTS TURKEY WHEN YOU COULD HAVE DINOSAUR?

THE VARIETY OF LEVELS ON SHOW CAN'T HELP BUT IMPRESS YOU, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU SEE THEM MOVING. ALTHOUGH EVERYTHING'S DONE IN THE SAME 'KID STYLE' OF THE SUPER NES GAME, IT'S STILL AMAZING TO WATCH SOME GENUINE MAJOR LEAGUE WEIRDNESS MOVING AROUND AND HINDERING YOSHI'S PROGRESS. HOW WELL DOES IT PLAY? PRETTY DAMN WELL...

Yoshi's Story

Like Kazooie, Mario's old mucker Yoshi can use eggs as a weapon, which he (she?) does frequently in *Yoshi's Story*. It's another 64-bit update of a Nintendo classic, only this time it remains squarely in 2-D, or '2 1/2-D' as Nintendo like to say. All this means is that it looks sort of 3-D (though a very bizarre, acid-casualty form) and plays like the platform games of old. Yoshi is restricted to platforms (or





tracks, on some of the earlier levels), much like SNES *Yoshi's Island*. The difference is that rather than having to reach a set exit, Yoshi – or Yoshis, as you get to choose from one of six, though there didn't seem to be much difference between them apart from colour – finishes each 'story' by collecting a certain amount of fruit. Don't ask me why, I only work here.

After playing *Yoshi's Story* for quite a while, in many ways it felt a lot like the SNES game. Though the changes were rung in some respects, like the use of the analogue stick to aim eggs rather than the old and annoying circling cursor, it still plays like its 16-bit ancestor. This isn't really a flaw, as *Yoshi's Island* was such a good game and *Mischief Makers* showed that there's still blood squirting through

the narrowing arteries of the 2-D platform genre, but from the levels – sorry, 'stories' – on show there didn't seem to be any great leaps forward.

F-ZERO X

The same could be said about *F-Zero X*, which at first play seems very much like SNES *F-Zero* with big shiny 3-D knobs on. Speedwise it's easily on a par with *Extreme G*, though a lot smoother, trading off background detail against a scorching 60 frames per second speed. You can really feel this in the controls of the antigrav sleds you race in the game – hitting the sides of the track happens a lot less often than in *Extreme G*, simply because the higher frame rate allows for more precise manoeuvring. If you want an analogy, imagine that you're



F-ZERO X

Speed, speed and more speed is what *F-Zero X* is all about – the screenshots here just can't convey the sheer rush of the game! Whether you're just pounding around one of the simpler circuits or flipping around in the inside – or even the outside – of tube-like tunnels, you just won't believe the pace of Nintendo's new racer. With 30 cars, over 20 tracks and eight different characters to choose from, and a four-player game that still travels at warp speed no matter how much action is on screen, it's like being fired

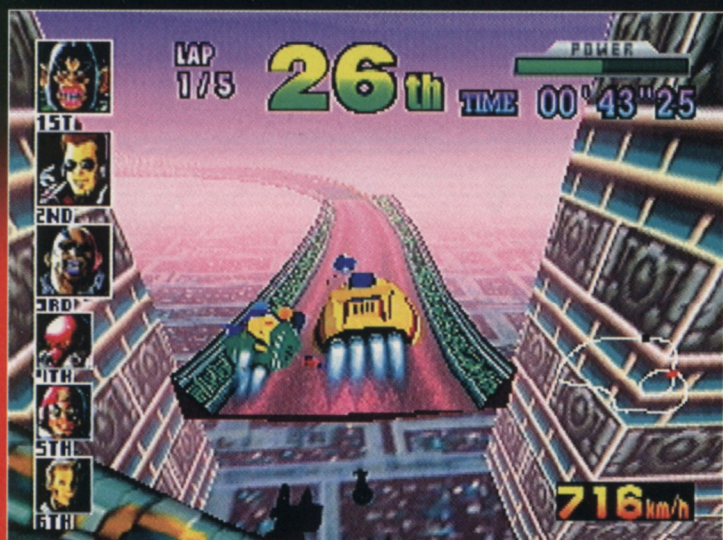
Chiba City Blues



"THE SKY ABOVE THE PORT WAS THE COLOUR OF TELEVISION, TUNED TO A DEAD CHANNEL." SO WROTE WILLIAM GIBSON AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASSIC CYBERPUNK NOVEL *NEUROMANCER*, AND THE PORT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT WAS CHIBA, HOME TO THE SPACE WORLD '97 SHOW. WHY HE PICKED CHIBA AS JAPAN'S 21ST CENTURY HIGH-TECH CENTRE IS A MYSTERY – HAVING BEEN THERE (IN FACT, HAVING GOT HOPELESSLY LOST THERE THANKS TO NINTENDO'S DIRECTIONS, WHICH LED ME TO GET OFF AT THE WRONG STATION) I CAN TELL YOU THAT IT'S JUST A TYPICAL PORT TOWN, AND THE PRESENCE OF A MONORAIL AND SOME MODERN OFFICE BLOCKS DOESN'T AUTOMATICALLY GIVE IT CYBER-CRED. MAYBE HE JUST THOUGHT THE NAME SOUNDED COOL. HE WAS RIGHT ABOUT THE SKY, THOUGH.



Space World Report

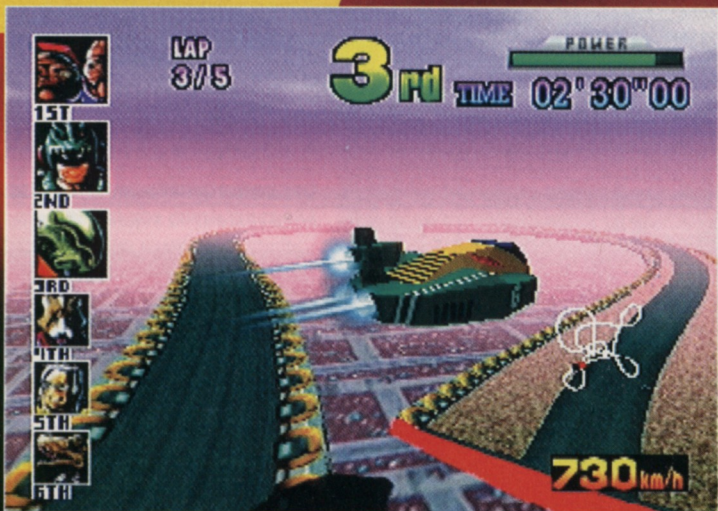


driving around a winding circuit at high speed, and to check your instruments you have to take your eyes off the road for a full second, and

from a cannon while strapped to Michael Schumacher's rocket-propelled greyhound!

The only thing that isn't fast is Nintendo, who are getting ready for its planned June 1998 release with all the urgency of a glacier. But if *F-Zero X* looks this good now, imagine what an extra six months will do to it...

every time you look up again there's another corner right in front of you. If you only have to look away for the time it takes to blink, you get much more time to react to the road, and that's the difference *F-Zero's* higher



GINZA IS TOKYO'S POSH shopping centre, which meant that I couldn't afford to buy anything here. I did learn the mysteries of Tokyo's pedestrian crossings, though. The red 'don't cross' man is lit for absolutely ages, and you wonder why the Japanese are just patiently waiting for the light to change when they could probably make a dash for it. There is a very good reason why they don't. They'd be killed. And so would you if you tried it.



Considering how busy Tokyo's streets are meant to be, traffic moves at a fair old clip. Even when the little man's green you're still in danger, because cars turning into your road from side streets don't seem to be that bothered about the mass of humanity scurrying out of their path. If you find yourself in the middle of the road in Tokyo, get out of it as fast as possible – before the front bumper of a Nissan does it for you!

frame rate makes!

There are 30 sleds and at least 24 tracks. Championship races take place in Jack, Queen and King cups (it's a safe bet that the hidden cup is 'Ace'), and you get to 'be' one of eight characters, though as they're

considerably uglier and more badly drawn than Nintendo's usual offerings that may not be a good thing!

The graphical style of the game is minimalist, background objects other than the tracks being pared to the bone in order to keep the speed up,





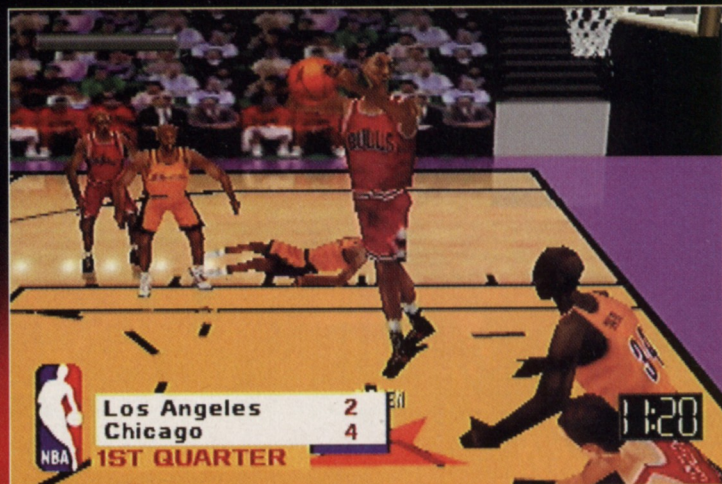
and it's got a retro look deliberately intended to evoke memories of the original *F-Zero*.

Even in the four-player game, *F-Zero X* is obscenely fast and smooth, and it seems that all the original's playability has been maintained. Apart from the loops and corkscrews,

though, has anything been added? It didn't look like it at the show, but since the game has been delayed until April 1998 (one of Nintendo's titles having its release date put back? Ooh, ooh, quelle surprise!), there's still time for new stuff to be added.

NBA BASKETBALL

Speaking of things being added (christ, I'm starting to sound like Barry Norman with all these clever segues), both *1080° Snowboarding* and *NBA Basketball*, both provisional titles, came from nowhere to get their first showings at Space World '97. *NBA Basketball* is, well, an NBA basketball



THE SIGNS IN THE SUBWAY POINT you towards 'Akihabara Electrical Appliance Town', but it's more excitingly known as 'Electric City'. If you can plug it in, you can buy it here. Techno-fetishists should be warned that their pants will explode the minute they step off the train!

If you can negotiate the crowds, and aren't crushed by the weight of freebies thrust upon you by the cute girls who stand outside every shop trying to get you to go inside and part with your hard-earned yen, you'll see today what the rest of the world will consider cutting edge hardware in five years' time. Pocket widescreen TVs? Been, seen, bought at a discount. Widescreen TVs in general? Yesterday's tech – *high-definition* widescreen is where it's at! If you're on the move, you could pick up a camcorder the size of a cigarette packet, or, continuing the cancer stick comparisons, a mobile phone little bigger than a Zippo.

All of this incredible gadgetry is crammed into areas with the floorspace of your typical British fish and chip shop. In Akihabara, as in much of Tokyo, the outrageous cost of land prevents stores from sprawling outwards, so they sprawl upwards instead. One game shop I went into covered eight storeys, even though a couple of fat blokes would have completely filled the width of each floor!

If you want to buy software or hardware, Akihabara is the place to go. I saw N64s selling for what worked out to be about £60, and if you can be bothered to haggle it's



possible to knock another fiver or so off that. Games are dirt-cheap too – *Jikkyou World Soccer 3*, the top-selling N64 game while I was over there, was going for just over £30, and that was one of the more expensive ones. The shop assistant did make a big thing of pointing out to me the disclaimer on the box that says 'For sale and use in Japan only'. Ha! Poor deluded fool.

Be warned that once you're in Akihabara, it's hard to get out with your wallet intact because you keep on seeing cool stuff that you just *must* have. My credit card took a severe beating in a laserdisc shop, and it was only the fact that the UK and Japan have incompatible TV systems that kept me from buying a tiny digital camcorder for just £400 – the same gadget would have cost getting on for fifteen hundred quid over here!



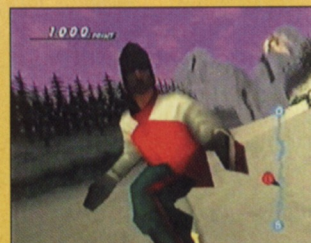
game, aiming for a realistic simulation of play rather than the stupid fantasy moves of *NBA Hangtime*, and even at this early stage was playable and fun. The tackling, or whatever it's called in basketball, still had some way to go, but even so you could still play a game, score baskets and generally run rings around the guy who was meant to be demonstrating the game. On the other hand, maybe he was just being polite and letting me win! Nah, surely not... Because *NBA Basketball* is aiming for realism, getting and keeping hold of the ball is harder than in most basketball games, but perhaps we've all been spoiled by the arcade-style play of titles like *NBA Jam* and deserve to have some realism shoved in our faces from time to time. It looks like *NBA Basketball* will be a fine simulation of the sport.

1080° SNOWBOARDING

As will *1080° Snowboarding*, Nintendo's take on the rapidly crowding 64-bit snowboarding genre from the team that developed *Wave Race*. I'm not a big fan of this show-offy 'sport', but *1080°* was still a blast nevertheless. As well as being by far

1080° SNOWBOARDING

ONE OF NINTENDO'S TWO 'SURPRISE' ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE SHOW,





NBA BASKETBALL

NBA BASKETBALL CAME FROM OUT OF NOWHERE, ITS EXISTENCE ONLY BEING ANNOUNCED A COUPLE OF WEEKS PRIOR TO ITS UNVEILING AT SPACE WORLD. ALTHOUGH IT WILL FACE COMPETITION FROM KONAMI'S SIMILAR (AND EQUALLY PLAYABLE) *NBA IN THE ZONE '98*, THE NINTENDO NAME WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ADD SOME EXTRA KUDOS!



the best looking of the snowboarding games, *1080°* also had a very good feel, different types of snow and ice having a dramatic impact on the handling of your plank. There only appears to be a rather flaccid three courses, unfortunately, but this number may grow. At the moment, the courses are Crystal Lake Short, the equally imaginative Crystal Lake Long and Golden Forest, the latter of which

is a dash through pine trees at sunset. *1080°* could be one of the few games where having the Rumble Pak actually helps gameplay, because the different snow surfaces produce a different vibration, and some types of snow are a lot faster than others. Being able to feel instantly that you're

on unfavourable powder prompts you to start looking for alternatives a lot quicker than you could just be looking at the screen.

64DD

The number of 64DD games has grown, though not by anywhere near the number everyone had hoped. The most hyped 64DD titles at the show weren't even games at all, but instead made up the *Mario Artist* series. The triptych so far comprises *Talent Maker*, *Picture Maker* and *Polygon*

Maker. (Shigeru Miyamoto also mentioned a fourth title, *Sound Maker*, but there was no sign of this.) All three look to be compatible with a Nintendo mouse (see? Didn't I tell 'em a couple of issues back that *Mario Artist* would be crap with the analogue stick?) and, more interestingly, a 'capture cassette' that lets 64DD users grab images from a TV or video and play about with them in the *Maker* series.



BOARDING

1080° SNOWBOARDING IS ALREADY THE FRONT-RUNNER OF THE N64'S SNOWBOARDING GAMES, BUT YOU'D EXPECT THAT FROM THE TEAM THAT BROUGHT YOU *WAVE RACE*. AT THE MOMENT THERE ONLY APPEARS TO BE A SMALL NUMBER OF TRACKS (JUST THREE WERE ON OFFER AT THE SHOW), BUT IF *WAVE RACE* IS ANYTHING TO JUDGE BY THERE'LL PROBABLY BE A FEW MORE HIDDEN AWAY SOMEWHERE!

THE 64DD

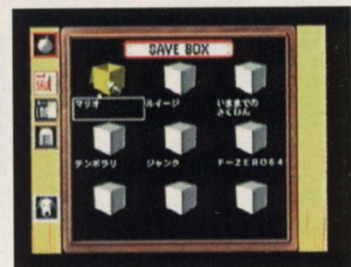
DEPRESSINGLY, THE 64DD'S LAUNCH DATE HAS SLIPPED BACK AGAIN. ALTHOUGH PEOPLE AT THE SHOW MAINTAINED IT WAS NOW DUE OUT IN APRIL, ONE OF NINTENDO OF AMERICA'S PEOPLE IMPLIED THAT A MIDSUMMER LAUNCH WAS LOOKING MORE LIKELY, SO UK GAMERS CAN ALMOST CERTAINLY FORGET ABOUT SEEING A PAL VERSION OF THE DEVICE UNTIL 1999.

SO, WHAT THE HELL'S THE PROBLEM? THE MACHINE ITSELF IS ESSENTIALLY A GLORIFIED ZIP DRIVE – IN FACT, THE 64Mb DISKS THEMSELVES HAVE A LOT LESS CAPACITY THAN THE 100Mb ZIP UNITS – WHICH IS PROVEN TECHNOLOGY, SO IT CAN'T BE THE HARDWARE. A NINTENDO EMPLOYEE I SPOKE TO IN FACT TOLD ME THAT PRODUCTION LINES FOR THE 64DD ITSELF WERE PRETTY MUCH READY TO GO. THE STUMBLING BLOCK APPEARS TO BE THE SOFTWARE.

IN HIS SPEECH, NINTENDO BOSS HIROSHI YAMAUCHI SAID THAT THE 64DD WOULDN'T BE LAUNCHED UNTIL IT HAD SOFTWARE THAT MADE IT WORTH BUYING, GAMES THAT OFFERED SOMETHING YOU CAN'T DO ON A CARTRIDGE. FROM THE LOOK OF THINGS, THESE GAMES HAVEN'T ARRIVED YET, AND WHAT NINTENDO HAVE LINED UP FOR THE FUTURE SEEM TO BE TAKING THE N64 AWAY FROM BEING A GAMES MACHINE AND TOWARDS SOME KIND OF EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCE!



THE N64 MOUSE AND CAPTURE CASSETTE, BOTH OF WHICH WILL BE PRETTY MUCH ESSENTIAL TO GET THE MOST FROM THE MARIO ARTIST SERIES.



YES, YOU'RE SEEING IT RIGHT – F-ZERO X WILL BE 64DD COMPATIBLE! TRACK DESIGNER, ANYONE?

Tokyo Tower

CONVENIENTLY LOCATED RIGHT BY MY HOTEL, TOKYO TOWER IS JAPAN'S VERSION OF EIFFEL'S PARISIAN LANDMARK, ONLY JUST THAT CRUCIAL LITTLE BIT BIGGER AND PAINTED A RATHER GAUDY ORANGE AND WHITE. THE VIEW FROM THE FIRST OBSERVATION DECK IS QUITE IMPRESSIVE, BUT FOR A TRUE KNEE-TREMBLING EXPERIENCE YOU'VE GOT TO SHELL OUT A BIT MORE DOSH AND GO ALL THE WAY TO THE TOP, A QUARTER OF A KILOMETRE ABOVE TOKYO.

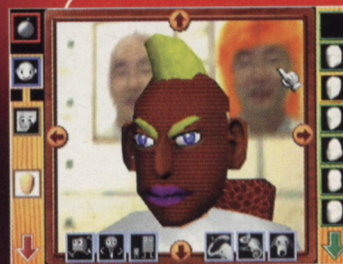
THE VIEW IS STUNNING – AS WELL AS SEEING THE WHOLE SPRAWLING MASS OF THE CITY, WHICH FROM THIS HEIGHT LOOKS LIKE RECTILINEAR PEBBLEDASH, YOU CAN SEE THE SKYSCRAPERS OF SHINJUKU AND EVEN MOUNT FUJI'S SNOWY CAP, MILES AWAY IN THE DISTANCE.

THE REASON THE UPPER OBSERVATION PLATFORM IS NERVE-WRACKING IS BECAUSE AT THIS HEIGHT, THE WIND NEVER STOPS BLASTING PAST – AND YOU CAN FEEL THE WHOLE EDIFICE SWAYING BENEATH YOUR FEET. AFTER A BIT OF THIS I WAS STARTING TO FEEL SEASICK ON TOP OF MY VERTIGO, SO I WENT BACK DOWN TO GROUND LEVEL. TAKING A LEAK IN THE FIRST FLOOR RESTROOMS, I COULD HAVE SWORN I COULD STILL FEEL THE GROUND SHAKING – UNTIL I REALISED THAT I *COULD*! THE TOWER'S LEGS WERE TRANSFERRING THEIR MOVEMENT TO THE GROUND AND THE BUILDING AT ITS BASE; VERY UNNERVING WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO RELAX A PARTICULAR MUSCLE...

This ability was put to amusing use in *Talent Maker*, with peoples' faces being grabbed and put onto the heads of virtual dolls. For that is what *Talent Maker* is, an electronic dollhouse that lets you create, modify and animate figures in a variety of scenes. The presence of an audio input makes it look like you'll be able to add sound effects too. Take a picture of someone who annoys you, then make them dance around like an idiot while making stupid noises!

Picture Maker is, surprisingly enough, an art package which also has some animation abilities. Nintendo's screenshots show some quite impressive artwork, so the N64's graphical talents are obviously all employed. Even if you can't draw, you can still just plaster Nintendo characters everywhere in interesting patterns!

The final *Mario Artist* disk, *Polygon Maker*, is also the most complex, but potentially the most rewarding. It's a



TALENT MAKER

STRANGENESS AHOY! TALENT MAKER LETS YOU CREATE DIGITAL DANCERS – BUT DO YOU WANT TO?



TOY STORY

NINTENDO'S PRESIDENT, HIROSHI YAMAUCHI, gave a speech on press day, where he outlined his vision of the future of videogames, as well as relentlessly plugging *Pocket Monsters*. To be honest, I personally didn't find much of his vision particularly appealing. As somebody who's been playing videogames for over 20 years and watched them evolve and grow into the fairly sophisticated creatures we know today, I thought that Yamauchi's plans were a definite retrograde step, moving games back into the playroom and further widening the rift in styles between consoles and PCs. But that's something for a future editorial...

Yamauchi's keywords for the day were "nurturing, trading, collection and addition". Nurturing refers to Tamagotchi-style games like – oh yes – *Pocket Monsters*, where the creatures that inhabit the games are 'grown' by the player and take shape according to how they're treated. Trading isn't merely swapping games with friends, but actually exchanging data, like a particular breed of – yes indeed – *Pocket Monster*. Collecting builds on trading as people build up their collections of – hmm, could it be – *Pocket Monsters*. Addition, finally, is where existing games can have new data put into them after purchase, such as 64DD titles or – it's that name again! – Game Boy *Pocket Monsters*.

In Yamauchi's vision, the future for videogames is bleak and full of catastrophe – except, of course, for Nintendo, who at some point before the inevitable crash will have the world-saving double whammy of the 64DD and – aaargh! – *Pocket Monsters*. The constant delays in the launch of the add-on were explained as a result of the time it takes to come up with unique new ideas, without which the system would be useless. Since the four planned launch games have been known (and in development) for ages, does this mean that they're not original and won't sell the 64DD?

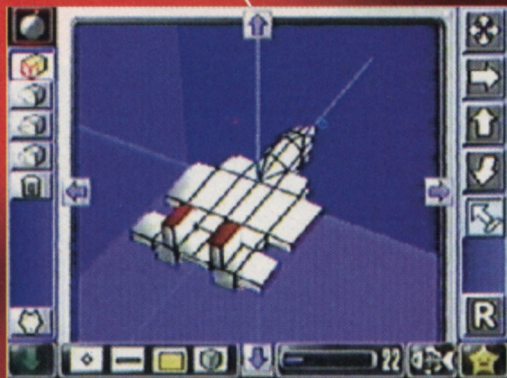
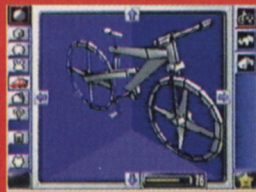
Yamauchi made the very good point that although more games are being released, the number of 'excellent creators' is not growing, so more bad games are being put out. Fair enough, though Nintendo certainly aren't lily-white in

PICTURE MAKER

DRAW, ANIMATE AND VIDEO GRAB – WITHOUT A £2,000 APPLE MAC!

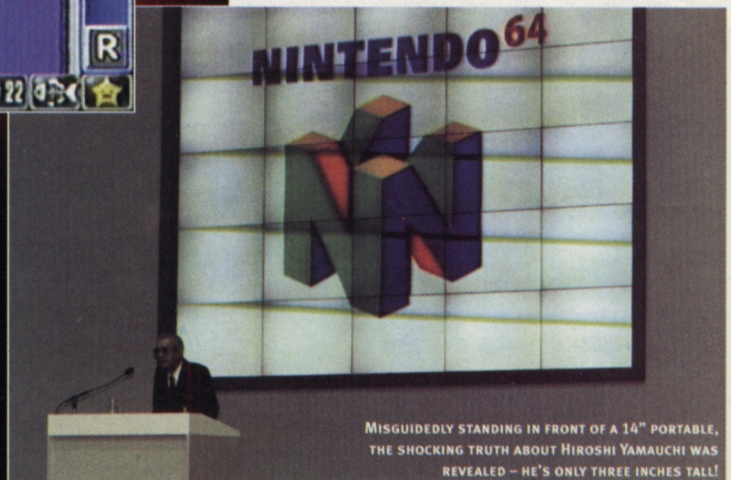


user-friendly 3-D object creator, which if you've got the patience can be used to build, colour and view some quite complicated models. You might not be able to produce *Babylon 5* on it, but it's a hell of a sight simpler to use than *Lightwave* or *3-D Studio*!



POLYGON MAKER

3-D MODELLING MADE EASY. BUT CAN YOU MAKE AN X-WING?



MISGUIDEDLY STANDING IN FRONT OF A 14" PORTABLE, THE SHOCKING TRUTH ABOUT HIROSHI YAMAUCHI WAS REVEALED – HE'S ONLY THREE INCHES TALL!

The really interesting thing about the *Mario Artist* programs is that they're compatible with each other. In theory, you could draw a picture in *Picture Maker*, incorporate it into a scene built in *Polygon Maker*, and then have someone from *Talent Maker*

run around and look at it! Exactly how data is shared between the disks is uncertain, but Nintendo are definitely working on it.

The problem is that Nintendo seem to be working on a lot of things. The 64DD was only on show in a glass

case, with no working software to see, and one of Nintendo's Japanese staff that I got talking to told me that they were now looking at a launch date of April 1998... "maybe". The *Mario Artist* programs were only on show on video, as were *Mother 3*, *Super Mario RPG 2*, *Sim City 64* and *Jungle Emperor Leo* (a

Japanese version of *The Lion King*) which looked... erm, 'unfinished' to say the least. There wasn't a single hands-on example of a 64DD game to be found.

Another video-only 64DD game was, oh god, *Pocket Monsters Snap*, which seemed to be little more than a glorified Tamagotchi, where you wander through a landscape looking for creatures to photograph (hence 'Snap'). In fact, if it was *Pocket Monsters* (or 'Pokemon', as the Japanese call them) you wanted, *Space World '97* was the place to be. *Pocket Monsters Pikachu* (the previously announced cart-only game) might not have been accompanied by the promised Microphone Pak that appeared in the show guide (a mysterious glass case containing only an oval slab of blue plastic seemed to be the likely intended location), but it was accompanied by, lord help us,

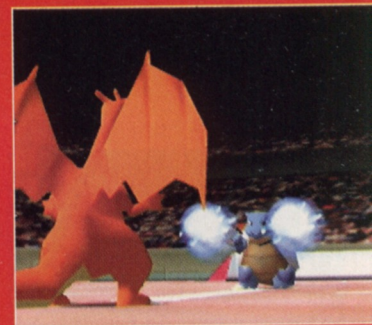


POCKET MONSTERS PIKACHU

BLESS 'IM, ISN'T HE SWEET? GOOD JOB, REALLY – PIKACHU SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN ADOPTED AS THE N64'S NEXT MASCOT! WATCH AS HE, ERM, WANDERS ROUND A FIELD.



POCKET MONSTERS STADIUM



THE 64GB

STRANGE BUT TRUE – SOME TIME THIS YEAR, YOU'LL BE ABLE PLAY GAME BOY GAMES ON YOUR N64! NINTENDO'S MAIN REASON FOR DOING THIS IS TO CASH IN ON THE SUCCESS OF *POCKET MONSTERS* OF THE GAME BOY – YOU CAN PUT YOUR



IF YOU READ THE REPORT ON NINTENDO PRESIDENT HIROSHI YAMAUCHI'S SPEECH, YOU MIGHT THINK NINTENDO ARE BEING A BIT DEFEATIST AND DESPERATE. YOU ONLY HAVE TO GO INTO ANY TOKYO GAME SHOP (AND THERE ARE PLENTY OF THEM) TO SEE WHY. PLAYSTATION ABSOLUTELY DOMINATES THE JAPANESE MARKET, WITH EVEN SATURN SOFTWARE FREQUENTLY OUTSELLING THE N64'S CATALOGUE. THE REASON IS CLEAR – THERE JUST AREN'T ENOUGH GAMES COMING OUT.

YAMAUCHI CAN RAIL ON ALL HE LIKES ABOUT HOW A FLOOD OF CRAP GAMES WILL CAUSE A CRASH, BUT AT THE MOMENT IT'S A SITUATION THE JAPANESE SEEM TO BE HAPPY WITH. WHILE I WAS THERE, A FAIRLY NONDESCRIPT-LOOKING SIDE-SCROLLING SHOOTER ON THE PLAYSTATION WAS GARNERING A LOT MORE ATTENTION (AND SALES) IN THE SHOPS

THAN *DIDDY KONG RACING*, RELEASED THE SAME DAY, SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE ARE FAR MORE PLAYSTATION OWNERS AROUND!

NINTENDO MAY BE DOING WELL IN AMERICA AND TO A LESSER EXTENT IN EUROPE, BUT ON THEIR HOME TURF THEY'RE BEING HAMMERED. HENCE, IT SEEMS, THEIR CHANGE OF TACK TO CASH IN ON THE CURRENT SUCCESS OF *POCKET MONSTERS*, WHICH IS SO HEAVILY MERCHANDISED THAT IT'S EVEN SPAWNED A SINGLE! (THE SINGLE IS THE WORLD'S WORST, MIND YOU – IT CONSISTS OF SOMEONE 'RAPING' THE NAMES OF ALL THE POCKET MONSTERS TO A J-POP BACKBEAT. MAKES YOU WISH FOR THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF 2 UNLIMITED!) IT MIGHT BE TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE, THOUGH – MOST OF THE N64 *POCKET MONSTERS* GAMES ARE INTENDED FOR THE 64DD, WHICH HAS BEEN DELAYED YET AGAIN. HOW FAR CAN THE PATIENCE OF JAPAN'S NINTENDO LOYALISTS BE STRETCHED?



Sony Vs Nintendo



POCKET MONSTERS SNAP

ANOTHER STRANGE GAME CONCEPT – A VIRTUAL GAME RESERVE! YOU CAN ONLY SHOOT THEM WITH A CAMERA, THOUGH...



Pocket Monsters Stadium (another of the few new 64DD titles), which lets you load Game Boy monsters into an N64! How? By using the Pak that did come back, the 64GB, a travel iron-shaped thing that plugs into a

controller and accepts Game Boy cartridges in a similar way to the Super Game Boy on the SNES. Normal Game Boy games can be played on the TV in a limited selection of colours, again like the Super Game Boy, but certain Game Boy carts can have their data read by the N64 and translated into glorious 64-bit Nintendovision. In *Pocket Monsters Stadium*, you can slot in your GB cart and see the monsters



POCKET MONSTERS COULD FIGHT ON THE GAME BOY, AND NOW THEY CAN ON THE N64 TOO, WITH THE HELP OF THE 64GB. HEY, DOES ANYONE ELSE REMEMBER BARCODE BATTLERS?



MONSTERS FROM THE GAME BOYS CARTS ONTO THE N64 AND SEE THEM IN HIGH-RES COLOUR! ONCE, THAT IS, YOU'VE SHELLED OUT FOR THE 64DD, THE 64GB AND *POCKET MONSTERS STADIUM*, BUT LIFE'S NEVER PERFECT, IS IT?

FOR MOST GAME BOY GAMES, THE 64GB SEEMS TO WORK A LOT LIKE THE SUPER GAME BOY ON THE SNES, LETTING YOU SELECT A COLOUR PALETTE TO CONVERT THE GAME BOY'S MONOCHROME GRAPHICS INTO A VAGUELY COLOURED EQUIVALENT. IT MIGHT SOUND LIKE AN ODD IDEA, BUT THE GAME BOY IS STILL MASSIVE IN JAPAN (PUT IT THIS WAY, WITHOUT THE GAME BOY AND *POCKET MONSTERS*, NINTENDO'S PROFITS IN ITS HOME MARKET WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY MUCH SMALLER) AND SOME EXTREMELY GOOD TITLES HAVE APPEARED DESPITE THE LIMITATIONS OF THE SYSTEM.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE ONLY EXAMPLES OF THE 64GB AT THE SHOW WERE UNDER GLASS AND NOT PLAYABLE, SO AS YET WE CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT IT'S LIKE TO USE. REST ASSURED, AS SOON AS WE GET OUR HANDS ON ONE, WE'LL LET YOU KNOW...

this respect by allowing crap like *Clayfighter* to appear on their machine. He was also somewhat disingenuous about the lack of RPGs on the N64 (probably the single biggest reason why the machine hasn't taken off in Japan), claiming that RPGs had "hit the wall". That'd be the wall of 3.1+ million copies of *Final Fantasy VII* sold in Japan alone, presumably.

Once past the buzzwords, Yamauchi's main thrust moved to the proposed "qualitative change" that would be brought about by the arrival of the 64DD, brought about by a "selected number of quality software". High-quality titles but very few of them, in other words – sounds like business as usual. The new breed of games would incorporate the aforementioned nurturing, trading, collection and addition elements. A hint was dropped as to how the last of these would be implemented – through "vending machines" installed at software outlets – but as the speech went on, it became depressingly clear that Yamauchi's brave new world was revolved around variants of *Pocket Monsters*, aimed specifically at children.

"The market of videogames," he said, "has been expanded by children, but they are getting tired of complicated games and the ones that force you to stay in front of the TV set for a long time. What shall TV games do? We can hardly find new ideas." What? "We can hardly find new ideas"? This from Nintendo, of all companies – the most adventurous game developer around? No wonder the 64DD's been delayed, considering the reason Yamauchi cited earlier.

Nintendo's solution to the perceived approaching crash is to diversify into products that are related to their new breed of games, such as collectible card games and other merchandising (like the omnipresent – and overpriced – Pikachu dolls staring out from seemingly every shop window in Tokyo) that will appeal to people who might not necessarily play the games themselves. Total control over all aspects of the new entertainment, in other words. If it succeeds, Nintendo have the entire cash cow to themselves, but what happens if *Pocket Monsters* fades – which it inevitably will – and whatever Nintendo settle on as its replacement doesn't take off? Think what happened to *Sega*, going from number one to almost nowhere in just a couple of years. Perhaps it's the fact that Yamauchi will be retiring in a few years that has made him more open to such risk-taking.

I realise that I'm taking a rather cynical angle on Yamauchi's speech, but world domination by *Pocket Monsters* isn't what I want to see happen to a machine as awesome as the N64. I want to see great, involving games with universal appeal, not overgrown toys for young children with five minute attention spans. Even the *Mario Artist* titles shown on video at the show weren't games, but sophisticated toys. It's interesting that Yamauchi completely ignored the role of the cartridge in his company's plans, even when one of the cart-based games less than 100 feet away (*Zelda*) was the most anticipated title in the West since *Mario 64*. The 64DD may well herald the end of videogames as we know them – but knowing what Nintendo have in mind to replace them, do we want it to?

therein slug it out in, well, a stadium. It might sound as thrilling as dry toast over here, but the Japanese are mad for it – Nintendo are banking on the enormously popular Pocket Monsters name to help shift the N64 in its home country. It wouldn't be a surprise if *Pocket Monsters Stadium* outsells *Zelda 64* in Japan...

The 64GB aside, there were no real surprises from Nintendo. In fact, it was business as usual, with the release dates of almost everything slipping back a month or two. It was the Game Boy that seemed to be getting all the cool stuff with, of all things, a clip-on video camera and a printer making an appearance!

Nintendo's strategy seems, as always, to be to release only a few, very high quality games itself, and let the third party publishers make up the numbers. The high costs and low margins involved in making N64

games has impeded this process, though. You only have to go into a Tokyo game shop and compare the couple of racks of N64 stuff to the aisle after aisle of Saturn and especially PlayStation software – and not just the games, but all the associated books, magazines, toys, kits, manga, anime, t-shirts and keyrings – to see what the Japanese punters think of this approach. Even with the N64 itself down to under £60 in some Akihabara shops, few people seem interested. They want a constant stream of new, new, new and they want it now, now, now! Considering the amount of Pikachu merchandise around, maybe it's no wonder Nintendo placed so much emphasis on the N64 *Pocket Monsters* titles. Better take out your keys and loose change, you don't want to scratch the N64's Japanese saviour when he moves in!

THE MICROPHONE PAK

IT WAS ANNOUNCED FOR THE SHOW. IT WAS IN THE SHOW GUIDE. BUT IT WASN'T ACTUALLY THERE. HMMM.

WE WERE ABLE TO DETERMINE THAT IT IS DESIGNED FOR USE WITH *POCKET MONSTERS PIKACHU*, AS WE'D ALREADY THOUGHT, AND THAT IT PLUGS INTO ONE OF THE FOUR CONTROLLER PORTS ON THE N64 ITSELF RATHER THAN FITTING INTO THE EXPANSION SLOT ON A CONTROLLER. CONSISTING OF A HEADSET AND A BOX ABOUT THE SIZE OF A CARTRIDGE, THE MICROPHONE PAK LETS YOU COMMUNICATE WITH THE CHARACTERS ONSCREEN; AT THE MOMENT, THE ONLY CREATURE WHO CAN 'HEAR' YOU IS THE YELLOW SQUIRREL/CHINCHILLA BEAST PIKACHU. SIMPLE COMMANDS ('JUMP', 'PLAY', 'EAT' AND SO FORTH) ARE SPOKEN INTO THE MIKE, AND IF HE'S FEELING CO-OPERATIVE, PIKACHU WILL DANCE TO YOUR BIDDING.

NO OTHER GAMES HAVE AS YET BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT WILL BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE MICROPHONE PAK, AND *POCKET MONSTERS PIKACHU* IS BASICALLY A TAMAGOTCHI ON STEROIDS, SO AT THE MOMENT IT LOOKS LIKE THE MICROPHONE PAK IS JUST A GIMMICK. BUT SINCE IT WASN'T EVEN AT THE SHOW, WE CAN HARDLY TELL FOR SURE, CAN WE?



IMAGINEER

After Nintendo themselves, the volume occupier at Space World was Imagineer, with five N64 titles on offer. The company's attempt to bring a decent beat-'em-up to the N64 was *Fighting Cup* (or *Fighters' Destiny*, as it'll be called in the West). *Fighting Cup* offers something a little different to most other fighting games – rather than being just a straight knock-down bout, the road to victory in *Fighting Cup* is to make the best use of various techniques in order to score points. Just kicking someone out of the ring scores you a mere single point, but managing to keep them within range until you can deliver a knockout blow nets you a hefty three. On the game I played, the number of points needed to win was

seven, but the actual number can apparently be set by the player.

With nine nicely characterised fighters, *Fighting Cup* looks to have a strong chance of taking the title of 'Best N64 Fighter'. If I had a complaint, it's one common to all the beat-'em-ups at the show; the controls seemed to be overly simplified. *Virtua Fighter* is the obvious inspiration for the style of play, but compared to Sega's classic the flexibilities of play seemed to be lacking. Enemies fell screaming to a simple pattern of punch-kick-punch-kick-punch, without any real need on my part to defend myself. Maybe the couple of months before the game is released will be used to tighten up this area.



FIGHTING CUP

OR FIGHTER'S DESTINY OVER HERE, THIS GAME LOOKED QUITE PROMISING, THOUGH TO READ SOME OF THE ONLINE COMMENTS YOU'D THINK IT WAS THE SECOND COMING!

Space World Report

Apart from *Zelda* and *Mother 3*, the only other N64 RPG is Imagineer's *Holy Magic Century*. Konami have

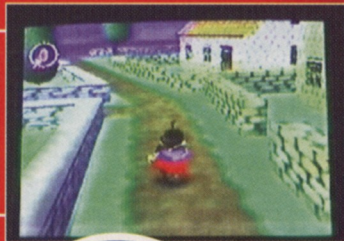
Holy Magic Century

THE N64'S ONLY 'TRADITIONAL' RPG, WITH TURN-BASED COMBAT. KONAMI WILL SELL IT OVER HERE.



picked this up for European release, but with the release date slipping to March 1998, there's no telling when it will finally turn up. The game brought Konami's own *Goemon* title strongly to mind, with large landscapes to wander through and a selection of characters, though there's rather more of an emphasis on the use of magic. There's also a lot of talking to other people in the game, but as the townsfolk I encountered were all prattling away in Japanese it was hard to judge how much of a role interpersonal communications will play in completing the quest.

Holy Magic Century is a game with a lot of potential, but it's going to have to get a move on – at the moment, it's only 60% complete, compared to the 70% complete *Zelda 64* which is due out just a month later! However, the



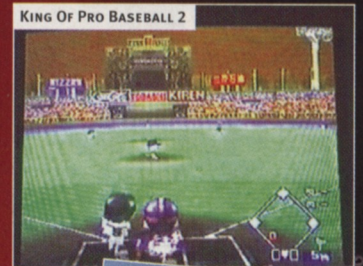
absence of RPGs is one of the main reasons for the N64's lack of success in Japan, so anything that helps deal with this shortcoming is welcome.

Snow Speeder 64 is one of the many snowboarding games heading down the slopes of Mount Nintendo – the bad news is that this one is done by the same people who brought you the woeful *Multi Racing Championship*, and reportedly uses much the same graphics engine. From the plodding and grainy version on display at the show, it's easy to believe this. The one difference *Snow Speeder* has from the other snowboarding games is that it also lets you take part on skis. However, Konami's *Nagano Winter Olympics* gives you this and more, as well as playing rather better, and *Snow*



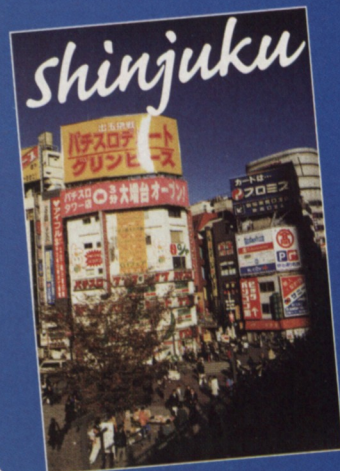
Speeder's two-player split screen option has the same tiny windows as *MRC*. Unless Imagineer can conjure up a miracle, this one looks like it's going to be buried by the avalanche of other, better, snowboarding games.

Imagineer's other titles were *King Of Pro Baseball 2*, which as far as I could tell looked an awful lot like *King Of Pro Baseball 1*, with the same



AKIHABARA MAY BE GADGET CENTRAL, BUT SHINJUKU IS WHERE YOU WANT TO GO TO SEE TOKYO AT ITS MOST MANIC. SHINJUKU STATION SUPPOSEDLY SEES OVER TWO MILLION PEOPLE A DAY GOING THROUGH IT, AND AFTER SEEING THE CROWDS I CAN BELIEVE IT. ANYTHING YOU WANT CAN BE BOUGHT IN SHINJUKU, WHETHER IT'S EXPENSIVE DESIGNER CLOTHES OR THE LATEST PIRATE VIDEOS, OPENLY ADVERTISED IN THE SHOP DOORWAY.

SHINJUKU IS A SCHIZOPHRENIC AREA. HOME TO THE MASSIVE TOKYO METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND THE CITY'S LARGEST CONCENTRATION OF SKYSCRAPERS AS WELL AS HUGE DEPARTMENT

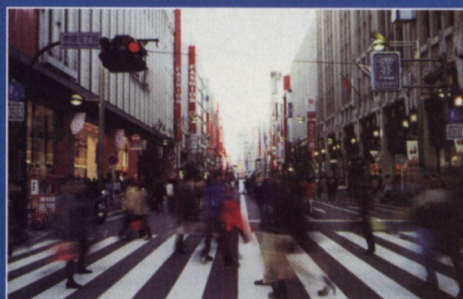
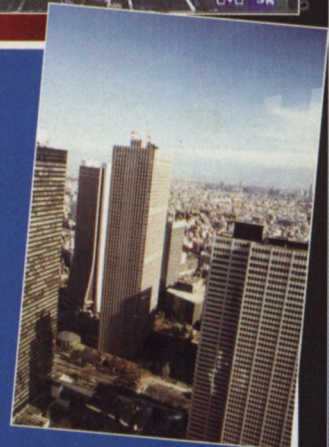


STORES THAT ARE SECOND ONLY TO THOSE IN GINZA IN TERMS OF POSHNESS, IT'S ALSO TOKYO'S SLEAZE CENTRAL – AND THE TWO SIDES TO ITS PERSONALITY ARE MIXED TOGETHER, SO THAT LITERALLY AROUND THE CORNER FROM A HARRODS-STYLE STORE YOU CAN FIND CLUBS CATERING TO ANY KIND OF DEVIANCY YOU CAN THINK OF, AS WELL AS A COUPLE YOU'D PROBABLY NEVER CONSIDERED! No, I DIDN'T GO IN ANY – I SUSPECTED I'D HAVE A JOB EXPLAINING THE MONSTROUS COVER CHARGES ON MY EXPENSES...

I PROBABLY COULD HAVE GOT AWAY WITH ONE BARGAIN – FANCY A MOBILE PHONE FOR JUST ONE YEN, OR A HALF A PENNY? THERE'S PLENTY ON OFFER IN SHINJUKU, AND THEY WEREN'T THE LAME-O BREEZEBLOCKS THAT ARE USUALLY OFFERED AS CHEAP

MOBILES IN BRITAIN, BUT ULTRA-MODERN, ULTRA-SMALL BITS OF KIT. I WAS SORELY TEMPTED TO BUY ONE, BUT I SUSPECTED THERE'D BE A CATCH IN THE FORM OF A FIENDISH TARIFF TO SIGN UP TO. SHAME...

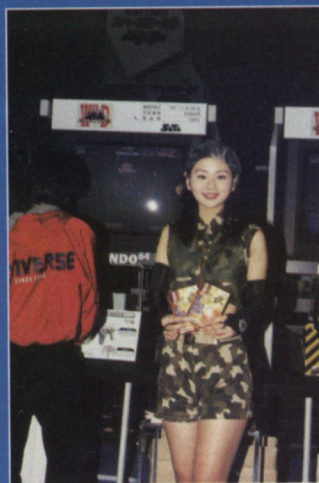
IT'S AN OBVIOUS, EVEN FACILE COMPARISON, BUT SHINJUKU REALLY IS LIKE WALKING ONTO THE SET OF *BLADE RUNNER*, ESPECIALLY AS IT GETS DARK AND ALL THE NEON COMES ON AND THE GIANT VIDEO SCREENS LEAP FROM THE WALLS. IT'S ALSO THE ONLY PLACE WHERE BUMS AND DOWN-AND-OUTS ARE OUT IN THE OPEN – I GOT HASSLED BY SOMEONE



WHO CLEARLY HAD A POINT TO MAKE, EVEN THOUGH I THOUGHT IT WAS JUST SLIGHTLY OBVIOUS FROM MY CAUCASIAN FACE THAT I WASN'T A LOCAL AND HAD NARY A CLUE WHAT HE WAS GIBBERING ON ABOUT. WHERE'S DECKARD WHEN YOU NEED HIM?

Babewatch

WHAT WOULD A COMPUTER SHOW BE WITHOUT LEGIONS OF YOUNG LADIES IN SHORT SKIRTS TO DISH OUT LEAFLETS TO THE SWEATING PUNTERS? OUR EDITOR HAD TO GET A FEW PICTURES, FOR PURELY POSTMODERN AND IRONIC REASONS, OF COURSE!



Homepride men players and overload of Japanese text, and the entirely incomprehensible *Kiratto Kaiketsu! 64*. This is apparently a console version of a Japanese board game, the rules, and indeed objective, of which totally escaped me. Chances of seeing it over here: about 0.01%. For obvious reasons, I didn't spend as long looking at this as the other games on show!

SETA

Another company with a reasonably sized portfolio at Space World was the little-known (at least in the UK) Seta. Their big game was the long-awaited *Rev Limit*, which occupied a whole aisle and also had a load of girls in short skirts and high heels attempting to attract the attention of the 99% male show attendees. Which they did, although they were a whole lot less smiling and friendly on the train back

from Chiba when two of them argued about who would get the only empty seat in the carriage, which was next to me – the loser sat down. Hey, I didn't leer *that* much...

But I digress. The big surprise about *Rev Limit* was how far away its release date was – the game is now not scheduled to reach Japanese streets until next May, which considering how far advanced the game seemed to be was odd. On the other hand, the handling of the cars certainly needed some tweaking. Although the game moved fast and certainly looked good, the cars were completely lifeless, steering more like toys than something you'd expect from a supposedly realistic racer.



At the moment, *Rev Limit* lets you race 12 cars over 15 tracks, and if the handling problems can be sorted out to give it the kind of vehicle control found in *Top Gear Rally*, it should be a good 'un. It's a pity there were no real surprises in the game – no matter how high the quality of the graphics, there wasn't a single trackside feature on show that hasn't already been seen in many other racing games.

Wild Choppers seems almost like a proper 3-D version of the old 16-bit *Desert Strike* games, and in fact we have a review of it this very issue – for the full crack, go to page 74!

Like Imagineer, the remainder of Seta's stand was filled out by games that will only get a release in Japan. *Pachinko 365 Days* is a pachinko game, the Japanese combination of pinball and fruit machines, which despite a large number of tables and

tricks like a two-player game still looked horribly jerky. *Morita Shogi 64* is another version of the Japanese chess game, though this one had the gimmick of a link-up connection built into the cart (thus the high price – well, high in Japan, anyway). The Japanese haven't taken to online gaming because, like us, there are no American-style free local calls, so it remains to be seen how this experiment will go down.

KONAMI

The Japanese giant, once a mainstay of Nintendo's consoles, only had three games at Space World, two of which had been seen before at ECTS in London. *Nagano Winter Olympics* was the main attraction, not surprising as the Japanese winter games are only a couple of months away. The version on show was complete, and looked certain to be a success. It wasn't quite the *Hypersports*-style button basher that some had expected, relying more on precise control of the athletes to win medals, but it still has its share of frantic moments. Despite cramming in a full complement of chilly sports, Nagano still managed to be more polished and playable than some of the snowboarding-only titles at the show!



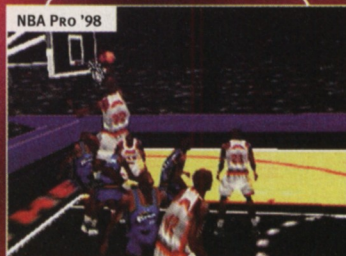
IT'S AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WITH A WIDE-ANGLE LENS!





arena which might obscure the fighters as they move around go transparent, and most stages have well-done lighting or weather effects to add a bit more visual impact. The parallaxed backgrounds still have some way to go, though – they don't seem to be attached to the arenas!

Although there are only eight basic fighters (five men, three women), the customisation screens let players expand this number enormously. Bodies can be stretched or shrunk to taste, skin colour and hair changed, and clothing can be varied to range from Gaultier to World Of Tat. In less than a minute, I'd transformed a bog-standard musclemans to an obese zombie dwarf with an afro bigger than his torso and the world's vilest multicoloured flares! The training option is more complicated, but here you can build up your fighter's range of special moves to suit your own preferred style of fighting. This ought to increase the longevity of the game – like all the other fighters at the show, the actual style of combat seems rather simplistic, but perhaps longer play will reveal hidden depths.



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

THE 64DD? THE MICROPHONE PAK? KIRBY'S AIR RIDE? TONIC TROUBLE? CONKER'S QUEST? ROBOTECH: CRYSTAL DREAMS? LET'S SMASH? DRACULA 3-D? HYBRID HEAVEN? STREET FIGHTER 64? BODY HARVEST? SPACE STATION SILICON VALLEY? MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE? BUGGIE BOOGIE? LEGION X? ALL HOPED FOR, NONE PRESENT.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

AH, THOSE JAPANESE AND THEIR WACKY GRASP OF ENGLISH! HERE ARE JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF JAPLISH NAMES SEEN GRACING THE DOORS OF VARIOUS TOKYO ESTABLISHMENTS...

- 'Let's Kiosk'
- 'Exotic Town' (betcha it isn't)
- 'Bldy Restaurant'
- 'Hearty Wedding'
- 'Big Bridal'
- 'The Wine Pub'
- 'Poo'
- 'Anal F*ck' (no kidding!)
- And my personal favourite, Ginza's 'Beer Station Rebecca'





HUDSON SOFT

Another old Nintendo ally is Hudson Soft, but their Space World lineup was very disappointing. *Dual Heroes* was one of the great hopes for N64 beat-'em-ups, but having played it I think I can safely say that it's rubbish. Getting through to the final boss on your first go, without knowing how to perform any special moves, does not bode well for a fulfilling and long-lasting gaming experience.



Dual Heroes is yet another Sega-inspired fighter, taking the basic combat system from *Virtua Fighter* and mixing in elements like walled arenas from *Fighting Vipers*. Unfortunately, it doesn't have anywhere near the playability of either, once again being a Space World '97 beat-'em-up with oversimplified controls and enemies that can't seem to work up the enthusiasm to fight back. If you can take out all comers with just random combinations of punches and kicks, where's the incentive to learn the more interesting moves? The fact that it still looks like *Power Rangers* despite the attempts to tough it up doesn't help much either.

Brave Spirits Wrestling didn't seem much more exciting, though to be fair I didn't get the chance to play for



very long. It looks similar to *Virtual Pro Wrestling*, aka *WCW Vs NWO*, though with a more Japanese flavour, being based as it is on the New Japan Pro Wrestling wrestlers. Offering four-player action, we should have a review of this next issue.

Hudson's last offering was another game that is almost certain to get a Japan-only release, being based on the Japanese gameshow *Denryu Iraira Bou*, something along the lines of *Irritating Electric Stick*. It's essentially a dressed-up version of the game you



find at village fetes and bring-and-buy sales where you have to guide a metal stick along a bent wire without touching it and making a buzzer go off – exciting stuff! The game actually looks a lot more interesting than the TV show, because it features all kinds of fantasy courses which would be impossible to build in real life. Carefully guiding a small dot through tangled mazes of wires sounds a pretty crap idea for a videogame, but in some ways it's strangely compelling when you actually play it. *Zelda* it ain't, though, but at least it's going to be sold at a cheaper than usual price. Review next issue, hopefully.

AERO GAUGE

After *F-Zero X*, any sci-fi racer has to be something really special, and *Aero Gauge* just doesn't deliver. It's a fairly blatant attempt to clone *Wipeout* and isn't bad speedwise, but completely failed to excite me. The look of the game is a conscious effort to ape *F-Zero*, with lots of chunky *Blade Runner*-style touches in the detailed backgrounds, but even as a two-player game it doesn't get the pulse racing like *Wipeout*, its inspiration, or *F-Zero*. Not even the multiple routes through the courses add much interest. Still, we'll give it a proper look next issue.



Aero Gauge

EVEN THOUGH IT LOOKS SIMILAR TO *F-ZERO X*, *AERO GAUGE* DOESN'T HAVE ANYWHERE NEAR THE PLAYABILITY. SHAME.



BESTS!

ZELDA 64 (NINTENDO)

WITHOUT A DOUBT THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE SHOW, EVEN IN ITS LIMITED-PLAY DEMO FORM, AND HOWEVER HARD NINTENDO TRIED TO CONVINCE US OTHERWISE WITH THEIR 17 MILLION *POCKET MONSTER* GAMES.



F-ZERO X (NINTENDO)

SUPER-SMOOTH AND FRIGHTENINGLY FAST; EVEN IN FOUR-PLAYER MODE IT MAKES *EXTREME G* LOOK AS JERKY AS STROBE NIGHT AT THE CLAYMATION ARTHRITIS DISCO!



1080° SNOWBOARDING (NINTENDO)

IT CAME FROM NOWHERE, YET WAS EASILY THE BEST OF THE SNOWBOARDING GAMES AT THE SHOW. IMPRESSIVE EVEN IF YOU THINK THE REAL-LIFE SPORT IS FOR PONCES AND POSERS.

WILD CHOPPERS (SEGA)

A GAME THAT REQUIRES A LOT OF PRACTICE BEFORE YOU CAN GET PROFICIENT WITH THE CONTROLS? ON THE N64? SAINTS PRESERVE US! EVEN IF IT DID LOOK LIKE THE UNINSPIRING *BLACK DAWN* ON PLAYSTATION.



GAME BOY GADGETS (NINTENDO)

NOTHING TO DO WITH THE N64, ADMITTEDLY, BUT HOW MUCH COOLER CAN YOU GET THAN A CAMERA FOR YOUR GAME BOY?



SONIC WINGS ASSAULT (VIDEO SYSTEM)

MAJOR, MAJOR LET-DOWN! SLOW, CLUMSY AND CONFUSING, THIS HOPED-FOR *PILOTWINGS* WITH GUNS LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO CRASH AND BURN.



64DD (NINTENDO)

OKAY, SO WHERE THE HELL WAS IT? A MOCK-UP STUCK IN A GLASS CASE AND A BIT OF VIDEO FOOTAGE ISN'T WHAT I FLEW 6,000 MILES FOR!

POCKET BLOODY MONSTERS (NINTENDO)

HI, WE'RE NINTENDO. WE MAKE THE, QUOTE, "FASTEST MOST POWERFUL CONSOLE ON EARTH," UNQUOTE. AND WHAT'S OUR BIG PUSH FOR 1998? USING IT AS A GLORIFIED TAMAGOTCHI!

CAPCOM, ABSENCE THEREOF

PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT THIRD PARTY COMPANY IF NINTENDO ARE TO GET THE N64'S CREDIBILITY BACK IN JAPAN, AND WHERE WERE THEY? DOWN THE PUB, PROBABLY.

BUSTS!

TOSH BEAT-'EM-UPS (VARIOUS COMPANIES)

SIMPLIFYING CONTROLS IS ONE THING, BUT TAKING EVERYTHING DOWN TO THE LEVEL ON SHOW IS A BIT MUCH, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE GAMES ARE MADE SO EASY!

TAMAGOTCHI WORLD

The virtual pets now become a rather strange virtual board game, which even has the same sound effects as the original pocket-sized 'loveable egg'! Up to four people can take part; the numerous subgames that pop up as the Tamagotchis progress round the board and grow up have names like 'Bang!' and 'Go!', and are, well, weird. In what's rapidly becoming a refrain for this feature, we'll have the review next issue.

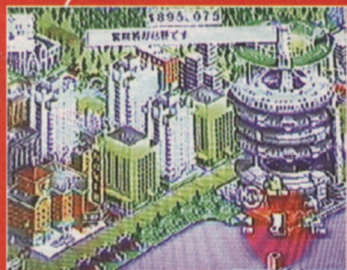
VIRTUAL PRO WRESTLING

The Japanese version of *WCW Vs NWO* (from THQ), this was thankfully a lot more developed than the buggy square-dancing version at ECTS, and with its four-player mode looked like it could be a lot of fun. As to whether it's still playable as a one-player game, see page 62 this issue!



SIM CITY 2000

CITY BUILDING MADE EASY - YOU CAN BE ALL CARING-SHARING, OR AN EVIL RACHMANITE!



SIM CITY 2000

Maxis's old PC/Mac title arrives on the N64, and looks much the same as it always did. One addition to the Nintendo version of the game is the presence of characters; four cute anime-style girls pop up throughout the game to ask you questions about your town planning plans, keep you updated on how things are progressing and offer advice if things start to go pear-shaped.

Although you can't go down into

the city itself (that feature is being reserved for the all-polygon *Sim City 64* on the 64DD, which will let you tour the cities you create and deal with the inhabitants on a more personal level), there do appear to be some subgames in there, like a horse racing event - if you build a racetrack, you get to spend a day at the races - and what looked like a kind of 3-D *Space Invaders*! We'll be reviewing this next issue.

TAMAGOTCHI WORLD

THE STRANGE LITTLE CREATURES FROM YOUR BLEEPING KEYRING NOW COME TO THE N64 IN THIS BIZARRE BOARD GAME!



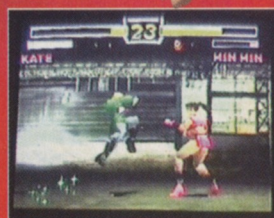
SNOWBOW KIDS

They might have huge and rather unattractive noses, but the titular Kids do get to make what turned out to be a quite fun game. Unlike the other snowboarding titles at the show, *Snowbow Kids* takes a fantastical, videogamey approach to the sport, with mad stunts to perform and power-ups like speed-boosting propellers to collect on the way down. The four-player mode provides a lot of laughs, and even manages to keep up a decent rate of speed. You'll never guess when we hope to have the review of this!



THIS COULD DUKE IT OUT WITH *FIGHTING CUP* AS A POTENTIAL BEST BEAT-'EM-UP.

ART OF FIGHTING TWIN



ART OF FIGHTING TWIN

I had high hopes for this interesting-sounding fighter, with its two modes of play (normal and super-deformed), but for a while it didn't seem much better than all the other beat-'em-ups on display at Space World. The range of moves on offer did seem to be bigger than most of the others though, so with luck it'll turn out to be a 'grower'. Once again, the model for the control method is *Virtua Fighter*, and in super-deformed mode there are some amusingly ludicrous super-moves to carry off. Review next ish, you'll no doubt be stunned to learn.

AUGUSTA MASTERS '98

A golfing game that thankfully wipes out all memories of the atrocious *Glory Of St Andrews*. Anyone familiar with PC golf games should be at home with this, as it uses easy-to-follow power gauges to make the swings. *Augusta Masters* is colourful and accurately recreates the actual Augusta course (not that I'd know), and golly gosh, will hopefully be reviewed next issue.





SIM CITY 64

Sim City 64 will be an entirely polygon-based affair, meaning the cities you build can be viewed from any angle – even street level! You can even fly through the cities you build in *Sim Copter*!



SUPER ROBOT SPIRITS

Probably the most interesting beat-'em-up at the show, even in its 50% complete form. Banpresto's title takes a distinctively Japanese icon, the giant humanoid robot beloved of shows like *Gundam* and *Patlabor*, and lets them kick the rivets out of each other. Even at this early stage the

game has potential; the robots can hover in mid-air, adding an extra dimension to the arenas, and by building up power through attacks they get to use increasingly powerful guns on each other!

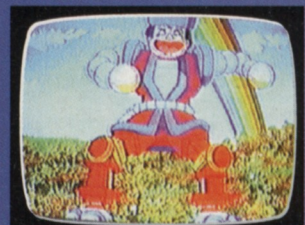
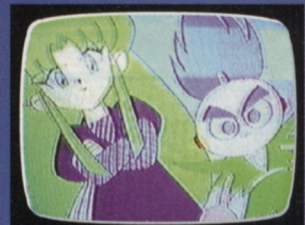
The robots at the show were still in a primitive state, with no surface detail and only flat shading, but were well-animated and quite responsive. The big question is whether people will relate to robotic fighters – after all, *Rise Of The Robots* was complete cack despite its (then) amazing graphics. Astoundingly, this game won't be reviewed next issue, as it's not due out until March, but we'll keep our eyes open and tell you how it's progressing.



Go Go Goemon!



HERE'S SOMETHING THAT CAUGHT ME BY SURPRISE WHEN I WAS FLICKING THROUGH THE TV CHANNELS – GOEMON THE SERIES! KONAMI'S CHARACTER, AND HIS MATES EBISUMARU, YAE AND SAUKRA, HAVE FOR SOME REASON LEFT MEDIEVAL JAPAN AND COME TO THE PRESENT DAY, WHERE THEY SEEM TO GO AROUND DOING GOOD AND FOILING THE PLANS OF SOME SORT OF EVIL WIZARD AND HIS HENCHBLOBS. IT'S EVEN GOT GIANT ROBOT GOEMON IMPACT IN IT! HOWEVER, DESPITE IT BEING ON IN THE KIDVID SLOT, IT'S UNLIKELY IT'D GO DOWN WELL IN THE WEST – PART OF THE EPISODE I SAW INVOLVED EBI GETTING SMASHED OUT OF HIS HEAD ON MAGIC MUSHROOMS!



THE OTHERS...

Yet another *Mahjong* game, this one courtesy of Athena. The USP of this particular tile-tapper seemed to be that it featured real mahjong players in the game. Woo hoo!

Bio Tetris was, erm, *Tetris*. Although this incarnation of the game supposedly had a unique gimmick – a 'bio-feedback' device connected to the N64 that sits in your ear and tells the machine your pulse rate and increases the pace of the game as you get more worked up – said plug-in wasn't apparent when I was doing the rounds. Probably just as well – who wants to see the earwax of a hundred journalists? Apart from that, the old falling block puzzler seemed much the same as ever.

If you're into sumo, you might like *64 Sumo*, or then again you might not. Super-deformed sumo wrestlers still aren't especially appealing... This hefty 128Mbit cart gives you plenty of lardy options, the training of your wrestler going right down to the level of making sure they have the right diet! It's quite a laugh to play, but knowing a bit about sumo would

probably enhance things enormously.

Wayne Gretzky's 3-D Hockey '98 is, you won't be shocked to learn, the follow-up to *Wayne Gretzky's 3-D Hockey*. The best just got that little bit better – need I say more?

Namco's entry into the N64 market wasn't anything cool like a *Tekken* game, but instead was super-deformed baseball game *Famista 64* (short for 'family stadium, apparently) which as far as I could tell played all but identically to *King Of Pro Baseball 2*.

As well as these, there were a few Western games that have already been covered in 64 MAGAZINE. *Extreme G*, *NFL Quarterback Club*, *FIFA '98* and *San Francisco Rush* put in a showing, and *Hexen* and *Clayfighter* were still hoping to shift a few copies in places where their reputations haven't preceded them...

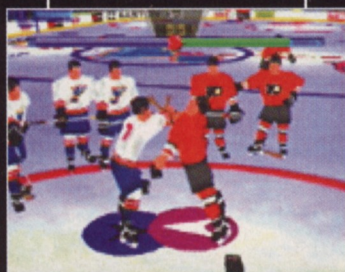
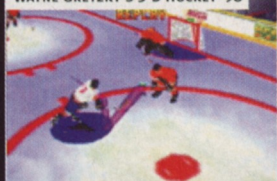
F⁶⁴



STATE OF PLAY

GAME	COMPANY	JAPANESE RELEASE DATE	% COMPLETE	PRICE (YEN)
<i>Zelda 64: TOOT</i>	Nintendo	April 98	70	6800
<i>F-Zero X</i>	Nintendo	June 98	60	6800
<i>Yoshi's Story</i>	Nintendo	Out now	100	6800
<i>Banjo And Kazooie</i>	Nintendo	April 98	70	6800
<i>1080° Snowboarding</i>	Nintendo	February 98	80	6800
<i>NBA Basketball</i>	Nintendo	July 98	50	6800
<i>Rev Limit</i>	Seta	May 98	80	6980
<i>Wild Choppers</i>	Seta	Out now	100	6980
<i>Morita Shogi 64</i>	Seta	April 98	100	9800
<i>Pachinko 365 Days</i>	Seta	April 98	90	6980
<i>Fighting Cup</i>	Imagineer	April 98	95	6800
<i>King Of Pro Baseball 2</i>	Imagineer	January 98	80	6980
<i>Holy Magic Century</i>	Imagineer	March 98	60	6980
<i>Snowspeeder 64</i>	Imagineer	March 98	70	6980
<i>Kiratto Kaiketsu! 64</i>	Imagineer	March 98	60	6980
<i>Famista 64</i>	Namco	Out now	100	6800
<i>Nagano Winter Olympics</i>	Konami	Out now	100	6800
<i>NBA In The Zone '98</i>	Konami	January 98	100	7800
<i>GASP</i>	Konami	March 98	80	7800
<i>Dual Heroes</i>	Hudson Soft	Out now	100	6980
<i>Brave Spirits Wrestling</i>	Hudson Soft	January 98	100	6980
<i>Irritating Electric Stick</i>	Hudson Soft	Out now	100	5980
<i>Sonic Wings Assault</i>	Video System	March 98	80	7800
<i>Mahjong</i>	Athena	Out now	100	6800
<i>Bio Tetris</i>	Amtex	March 98	95	TBA
<i>Sim City 2000</i>	Maxis	Out now	90	6800
<i>Wayne Gretzky's 3-D Hockey '98</i>	Midway	February 98	80	7800
<i>Aero Gauge</i>	ASCII	Out now	100	7800
<i>Virtual Pro Wrestling</i>	Asmik	Out now	100	6800
<i>Tamagotchi World</i>	Bandai	Out now	100	6800
<i>Snowbow Kids</i>	Atlus	Out now	100	6800
<i>Art Of Fighting Twin</i>	Culture Brain	Out now	100	6980
<i>Augusta Masters '98</i>	T&E Soft	Out now	100	7980
<i>Chameleon Twist</i>	Japan System Supply	Out now	100	6980
<i>Super Robot Spirits</i>	Banpresto	March 98	50	7800
<i>64 Sumo</i>	Bottom Up	Out now	100	7980

WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3-D HOCKEY '98



64 SOLUTIONS

AT LAST!

THE WAITING IS OVER!
The Ultimate Tips magazine for the Ultimate console is here!

MORE!

Most Nintendo magazines stretch out solutions over many issues. We do it all in one. No-one does it better!

PORTED!

4 Solutions gives you full game maps, handy hints, the very latest push-button cheats, and lengthy and authoritative playing guides to the games you want solving.

GIANT!

32 pages of unadulterated gaming heaven! Bigger than any other N64 magazine!

COMPLETE A-Z OF CHEATS

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Volume Two

From the makers of 64 magazine

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The UK's first N64 tips magazine!

Fully mapped complete 43-page guide & cheats!

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PLUS! Mini tips and essential details on all new N64 games!

Diddy Kong Racing! The best racing game on N64 - full 17 page solution and exclusive cheats! Buzz on to page 60

132 pages of raw cheats, tricks and tactics!

INCLUDING:

In issue two, full solutions to every new N64 game:

Goldeneye
Diddy Kong Racing
Extreme G
Pilot Wings
Killer Instinct Gold
MK Trilogy
Mischief Makers

PLUS:

The complete A-Z of Nintendo 64 cheats and tips, so you're never without the full list whichever issue you buy!

64 SOLUTIONS

Our pledge is to give you the best and most accurate information. The complete guide, with relevant pictures and captions. This is our promise to you!

WHEN?

The second issue of 64 Solutions is out now priced at £3.95 and is available from all good newsagents. Don't miss it!

NOT A BAD OLD SELECTION OF GAMES THIS MONTH. WELL, NUMBERS-WISE, ANYWAY – THE QUALITY HAS RANGED FROM THE GOOD TO THE DISASTROUS! NOTHING EVEN MANAGES TO GET A SIZZLER AWARD, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE A COUPLE OF TITLES THAT ARE BUBBLING UNDER THE CRUCIAL 90% MARK, WHICH MAY BE WORTH YOUR WHILE!

48 MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES: SUB-ZERO

Like Sylvester Stallone attempting to move from action roles to serious acting, Sub-Zero is trying to make the sideways shift from beat-'em-ups to platform adventuring. Did he make a *Cop Land* – or a *Stop Or My Mom Will Shoot*?



52 FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98

It's a sequel to one of the most maligned games ever. It's an improvement over the original, certainly – but how much better?



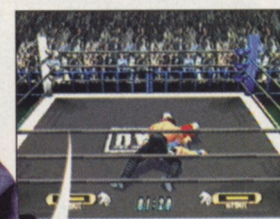
56 WORLD SOCCER 3

Konami have followed up *J-League Perfect Striker* with this international edition. Is it possible to improve on footballing perfection?



60 DUAL HEROES

You'll be delighted to hear that this new fighting game isn't as bad as *Clayfighter*. But that's all you'll be delighted about!



62 WCW Vs NWO

Wrestlemania! Grunt 'n' grapple your way around the squared circle in what, surprisingly, has turned out to be the best fighting game on the N64 to date!



64 SAN FRANCISCO RUSH

Street racing with an all-American flavour! But is it worth playing a game where the car spends more time in the air than on the road?



68 AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT

This game, from the programmers of *Pilotwings*, has been eagerly awaited. Pity it wasn't worth it!



72 WILD CHOPPERS

Airwolf? Chah! Blue Thunder? Kiss my ass! This is the only place to go for full-on chopper action!



76 BOMBERMAN 64

Bomberman hits the UK – how did he manage to get all that Semtex through customs?



Box Clever

EVERY REVIEW IN 64 MAGAZINE CONTAINS STANDARD INFORMATION ABOUT EACH GAME, GIVING YOU DETAILS AT A GLANCE.

Memory Options

MEMORY: EVERY REVIEW WILL TELL YOU WHAT THE CARTRIDGE SAVE OPTIONS INCLUDE.

CONTROLLER PAK:

YOU CAN BUY A SEPARATE MEMORY PAK, SO WHAT ELSE DOES IT GIVE YOU?



\$64,000 Question

THIS IS WHERE WE TELL YOU HOW MUCH OF THE N64 IS USED BY EACH GAME AND WHETHER THERE ARE ANY SPECIAL NEW FEATURES WHICH ONLY THE N64 COULD HANDLE. HOW MANY GAMES ARE TRULY 64-BIT?



PAL Performance

IN UK UPDATES, THIS BOX REPLACES THE \$64,000 QUESTION. IT ASKS IF THE UK VERSION OF THE GAME BEEN OPTIMISED TO RUN AT FULL SPEED AND FULL SCREEN ON BRITISH TELLIES – OR HAS THE PRODUCER JUST HACKED OUT A STRAIGHT CONVERSION WITHOUT BOTHERING TO CRANK UP THE SPEED FOR OUR SLOWER N64S?



The Awards

What does the overall score mean? Unlike many magazines, where an 'average' game can still achieve 80%, 64 MAGAZINE is stricter in awarding scores. Here's how we rate things:

95%+

Guaranteed steroid free! Winners of the Gold Medal are those rare titles that every N64 owner should buy. We are going to be very selective about gets these...

90%-94%

While not quite an essential purchase, any game that receives our Sizzler award should definitely be in the running for your readies.

80%-89%

Either the low end of excellence or the top end of great, depending how you look at it. Games in this range are worth investigating, especially for fans of the game's genre.

60%-79%

Approaching Planet Dubious; games that end up here are either good but flawed, or average but redeemed by clever features. Think carefully before buying.

40%-59%

Well average. Any game that lands in this area will have little special to offer you, the game-starved punter. Think very carefully before buying.

20%-39%

The Dead Zone! Anything that can only scrape this kind of score should be left on the shelf to rot.

BELOW 20%

We used to hope that no N64 game could fall this low. Unfortunately, one has!



47

The Ratings

Dog's bollocks or dog do? We judge each N64 game on the following criteria: graphics, sound, gameplay and challenge.



SHEER BRILLIANCE – AS GOOD AS YOU'LL FIND ANYWHERE!



VERY GOOD, BUT NOT PERFECT.



DOES THE JOB, BUT NOTHING SPECIAL.



DEFINITELY BELOW PAR. WATCH OUT.



READ 'EM AND WEEP, ESPECIALLY IF YOU'VE BOUGHT IT!

Ninfo



Publisher: GT Interactive
Developer: Midway

Game Type: Platform beat-'em-up
Origin: USA

Release Date:
Price:

January
ETBA

MORTAL KOMBAT MYTHOLOGIES SUB-ZERO

SUB-ZERO becomes the first *Mortal Kombat* character to get his own game. But is it a **BURNING** success or a **CHILLING** failure?

LOVE IT OR HATE IT, *Mortal Kombat* and its subsequent sequels have met with outstanding success. From the moment the gruff voice first announced 'Finish him', a nation of gamers was

hooked, computer-generated violence changed forever and now no self-respecting beat-'em-up can be seen out in public without at least one horrific fatality per character and enough blood to keep the Red Cross going for months.

However, there is only so far you can go with a beat-'em-up. After all, adding new characters and new moves is all very well, but after a while, people begin to realise that it's becoming very much money for old rope.

And so a newer, better *Mortal Kombat* is waiting in the wings, with new characters, new moves, and this time, a new dimension. That is to say, a third dimension. Before this wondrous game arrives though, we are offered something which is a bit of a compromise. It's not 3-D, but then it's not strictly 2-D either. Enter



SUB-ZERO HAS AN ELECTRIFYING EXPERIENCE IN THE SEWERS WITH SOME KIND OF GREEN EEL-LIKE CREATURE. HE SHOULD HAVE GONE BY BARREL!



INITIALLY, YOUR RUN-OF-THE-MILL BASIC OPPONENTS ARE FAIRLY HARMLESS, ATTACKING WITH HANDS, FEET AND PERHAPS THE ODD STICK. ON LATER LEVELS THOUGH, THE WEAPONRY BUDGET INCREASES.

stage left, *Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero*.

If you've ever played a *Mortal Kombat* game – and unless you've been hiding under a rock for the last five years, you must have – then you'll know that the games usually have fairly involved storylines, with each character in the game nursing a deep-seated hatred of pretty much every other character in the game. You know the sort of thing: 'Johnny Cage had pursued the evil Scorpion for many

It's MK on the



THIS IS ONE OF THE SCANTILY-CLAD FEMALE GUARDIANS IN THE FORTRESS. DEFEAT HER TO OBTAIN ONE OF THE THREE CRYSTALS.

Memory Options

MEMORY:
STORES CONTROL CONFIGURATION/ OPTIONS SETTINGS

CONTROLLER PAK:
SAVES GAME PROGRESS INFORMATION AT END OF LEVEL



\$64,000 Question

- ➕ IMPRESSIVE PSEUDO 3-D BACKGROUNDS
- ➕ ATMOSPHERIC SOUNDS
- ➕ CHALLENGING GAMEPLAY
- ➖ MAJORITY OF CHARACTERS TWO-DIMENSIONAL SPRITES
- ➖ CLUMSY CONTROL METHOD
- ➖ UNAVOIDABLE DEATH SYNDROME



SUB-ZERO GETS AXED FROM THE NETHEREALM'S LACROSSE TEAM BY THE TEAM CAPTAIN, ANNOYED THAT HE'S FORGOTTEN HIS STICK AGAIN.

Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero



MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE END OF THIS LEVEL AND YOU'LL BE HORRENDOUSLY BEATEN BY A HUGE BLOKE WITH A FRISBEE. MAKES YOU WONDER WHETHER IT'S REALLY ALL WORTH IT...

years, ever since the heartless ninja had broken into Cage's house one night and cruelly decapitated his favourite gerbil. Now Cage has tracked the deadly oriental assassin to the competition in the Outworld, where he can finally avenge his beloved rodent, and perhaps save the human race from extinction if he has some time left afterwards.'

FROSTY!

If this is the kind of thing that you're into, then you're onto a winner already. The plot to *MKM: Sub-Zero* reads like something you might get if you locked a hundred monkeys in a room with a hundred typewriters and asked them to re-write Tolkien's *Lord Of The Rings*.

Basically, if you'll remember, in *Mortal Kombat 2* we met Shang Tsung, who, it turned out, was the ultimate ruler of the outworld, a position previously thought occupied by Goro, the four-armed chap. Well now it turns out that Shang Tsung isn't actually the ultimate ruler of the Outworld either, and it is in fact a bloke called Shinnok. He's a fallen Elder God who has been taking things easy off in a holiday dimension

somewhere and has come back home to sort things out along with a



SUB-ZERO, UPON READING THE BOOK A QUICK ROUTE TO A HAPPY LOVE LIFE, MISINTERPRETS THE PASSAGE ENTITLED 'HOW TO PICK UP WOMEN'.



ONE OF THE LEVELS CONTAINS THESE HUGE HAMMERS. THEY MOVE UP AND DOWN AT REGULAR INTERVALS, MAKING IT PRETTY EASY TO MOVE PAST THEM. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE FIGHTING WITH SOMEONE AND INADVERTENTLY STEP INTO THE PATH OF A HAMMER AS IT STRIKES... OUCH!



sidekick sorcerer named Quan Chi (I do wish they'd give these people proper names – it plays hell with my spellchecker). Shinnok, having seen what humans have done to his Outworld, and also slightly annoyed that someone's named a large two-engined helicopter after him, intends to conquer the Earth. Quite where Sub-Zero fits into all this isn't immediately clear, but that doesn't matter. All you need to know is that you've got to jump, kick and ice-blast your way through eight huge but relatively linear levels, find three magical items on each stage, and

recover an ancient amulet which Shinnok's apparently quite fond of.

CHILLING!

By now, assuming you haven't gotten fed up with all the *Mortal Kombat* history and wandered off to play *Street Fighter*, you may have realised that this isn't your usual run of the mill *Mortal Kombat* game. In fact, it's *MK* on the move. For rather than simply being a beat-'em-up, this game



ONE OF THE COOL THINGS ABOUT THIS GAME IS THAT YOU CAN TAKE ON MULTIPLE OPPONENTS. OF COURSE, THIS ISN'T SO GREAT WHEN THEY PROCEED TO DECK YOU.

Show Me Some Moves...

SUB-ZERO, BEING AN ABSENT-MINDED SORT OF CHAP, APPEARS TO HAVE FORGOTTEN MUCH OF HIS TRAINING. FEAR NOT, FOR HE CAN LEARN AS HE GOES! HERE'S A RUN-DOWN ON THE SPECIAL ABILITIES YOU CAN DISCOVER...

ICE BLAST

OLD FAVOURITE THIS. FREEZE YOUR OPPONENT SOLID, THEN HAMMER THEM AT YOUR LEISURE.



SLIDE

USEFUL FOR DUCKING UNDER PROJECTILES, OR NIPPING THROUGH LARGE ROBOTS' LEGS! OH, AND YOU CAN TRIP PEOPLE UP.



DIRECTIONAL ICE BLAST

AN ADDITION TO THE USUAL HORIZONTALLY-TRAVELLED ICE BLAST, THIS ALLOWS DIAGONAL ICE SHOWERS, UP OR DOWN.



AIR ICE

JUMP AND FIRE ICE WHILST IN MID-AIR. IDEAL FOR THOSE AIRBORNE ENEMIES.



ICE CLONE

MAKE YOURSELF AN ICY FRIEND! HE'LL FREEZE PEOPLE STIFF ON CONTACT, CONFUSE THE ENEMY AND STAND IN FOR YOU AT BORING PARTIES.



ICE SHATTER

FIRE TWO ICE BLASTS, THEN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SHATTER YOUR ENEMIES WITH AN UPPERCUT. NO MORE PROLONGED COMBAT!



SUPER SLIDE

LIKE THE SLIDE, BUT WITH BETTER DISTANCE, AND YOU WON'T STOP WHEN YOU HIT SOMEONE, ALLOWING YOU TO TAKE OUT MULTIPLE OPPONENTS.



FREEZE ON CONTACT

KING MIDAS DID IT WITH GOLD, NOW YOU CAN DO IT WITH ICE! TOUCH YOUR OPPONENTS TO GIVE THEM A CHILLY WELCOME.



POLAR BLAST

BLOW 'EM ALL AWAY WITH THIS ICE BALL WEAPON.



49





Lost The Plot?

WHAT'S A MORTAL KOMBAT GAME WITHOUT A CONVOLUTED STORYLINE? AS THE FMV SEQUENCES FROM THE PLAYSTATION VERSION ARE ABSENT, THE STORYLINE IS PORTRAYED THROUGH STATIC SCREENSHOTS COMBINED WITH CHARACTER DIALOGUE. IN THIS EPISODE, SUB-ZERO FINDS HIMSELF IMPRISONED IN A CELL CONTAINING A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER...

could best be described as a platform-cum-beat-'em-up-cum-adventure game – effectively three games in one!

The general gameplay revolves around making your way through the Netherrealm, a feat you accomplish by moving from one end of a level to another whilst negotiating various platforms, traps and precipices. This is obviously the platform element. Along the way you meet various assorted unfriendly inhabitants of said Netherrealm who you must defeat with your finally honed martial arts

techniques – hence the beat-'em-up element. The unusual part, though, is the moves themselves, for they must be learnt.

Now, when I say 'learnt', I don't mean learnt in the usual way of beat-'em-ups, whereby you study a mass of directional instructions more complex than the programme code for the actual game itself, following which each move takes roughly ten minutes and three sets of hands to initiate. No, because you see Sub-Zero, despite being a top thief and assassin, apparently doesn't know all his old

MK moves, this being a prequel or something. So he has to learn them all over again, and he does this by gaining experience points.

These are earned in combat (or even Kombat) with the enemy, with more points scored for harder enemies – that's 'hard' as in 'well' – and also for pulling off combinations. Once you've earned a certain number of points, a special move icon appears, and by referring to the status screen, you can then learn the button combinations needed to execute this new move. Add to this the Tablets of Truth, which can

be picked up and read to teach you tricks and techniques to help you through each level, and you've got the adventure element.

The game itself looks more or less identical to the PlayStation version; in fact it may very well have been a direct port from that console. It actually loses out by not having the FMV sequences present in the PSX version, and the sound quality isn't quite as impressive – the PlayStation presumably taking its sound from the CD. However, the N64 sound is still pretty good, and if you're one of those people who hates sitting through hours of FMV – and in which case, good choice buying an N64 – then you'll be pleased to know it's been replaced by static shots which can be skipped through quickly.



HERE SUB-ZERO GAINS EXPERIENCE POINTS FOR PULLING OFF A TRICKY COMBO. ONLY ABOUT FIVE HUNDRED MORE TO GO...

It's Gore Jim, But Not As We Know It...

MORTAL KOMBAT GAMES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN GORY – AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT MADE THEM SO POPULAR! IN ADDITION TO THE USUAL BLOOD SPLATTERS AND FATALITIES, YOU NOW GET TO



WITNESS SOME SERIOUSLY OVER-THE-TOP GRAPHIC DEATH SEQUENCES WHEN SUB-ZERO RUNS AFOUL OF THE VARIOUS DEVIANT TRAPS. THE BEST THING ABOUT THESE THOUGH IS THAT YOUR OPPONENTS CAN BE DRIVEN INTO THE TRAPS AND REDUCED TO SO MUCH TOMATO RELISH WITH BARELY ANY EFFORT ON YOUR PART.

HERE WE FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SUB-ZERO MIS-TIMES A JUMP ON THE EARTH LEVEL. GIVE THE MAN A HAND!



Cool!

The big question though, must be "how does it play?". And the answer is, "surprisingly well". After all, what we're dealing with here is basically a 2-D game which has been given some pseudo 3-D treatment.

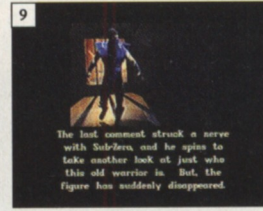
Although you pretty much move from left to right, or vice versa, the game engine uses tricks like undulating

This game is hard



THIS LANDSCAPE APPEARS TO MOVE IN AND OUT OF THE SCREEN, CREATING THE ILLUSION OF DEPTH WHILST THE CHARACTER DOESN'T ACTUALLY MOVE!

Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero



backgrounds and shrinking the character's size now and then, all of which serve to give the impression that he's moving backwards and forwards 'into' the screen.

To begin with, the gameplay in *MKM: Sub-Zero* is extremely linear, particularly the first stage where you are basically forced to run from one end of the level to the other, then drop down and run back again. This makes the first level pretty boring, which is a shame, as it doesn't give a very favourable impression of the whole thing. However, if you can stick the first level out, the game becomes rapidly more complex and far more entertaining. The route to the end of the level becomes less obvious, more convoluted. The tricks and traps, which it has to be said are more or less absent on the first level, become more and more devious as the levels progress. Collapsing platforms, massive blasts of wind, swinging chains, deadly pendulums, electric eels – all these and more will impede you in your quest for the amulet. And the enemies you meet get more dangerous too. For instance, on the first level, all the opponents look and fight the same aside from Scorpion, who you run into near the end. On later levels they come in all shapes

and sizes, including huge polygon-animated robots.

DEAD COLD!

Oh, did I mention the difficulty level? This game is *hard*. If you like your games challenging, then this is definitely worth a look. There are five difficulty levels, but even on the lowest – supposedly 'very easy' – setting, the game is damn hard! And to make things even more difficult, the last three levels of the game can't be accessed on any difficulty level below 'medium'. Believe me, this game will *not* be a walk-over, not by any means.

This is one of the things which gives *MKM: Sub-Zero* its longevity. Although the game is extremely hard, with a lot of practice, you'll be able to learn where the traps are, how best to defeat them and how to best take care of the opponents, and you will slowly be able to progress through. The difficulty has been created through cunning tricks and traps rather than – as is often the case in some games – by just throwing loads and loads of opponents at you in ever increasing numbers and making it practically impossible to finish without a cheat. In this case, persevere with *MKM: Sub-Zero*, and you'll actually feel like you're achieving something.



SUB-ZERO RUNS INTO A BIG ROBOT, ARMED WITH FLAMETHROWERS AND A MACHINE GUN. I THOUGHT THIS WAS MEANT TO BE A REALM OF MAGIC!

It has to be said that this game doesn't exactly stretch the boundaries of the N64's capabilities. But then neither did *Mischief Makers*, another predominantly 2-D platformer, and that was great fun. *Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero* likewise, is fun, although it's not a game for the faint hearted – or come to that, for the easily queasy. If you're looking for your next *MK* fix though, or simply would like to try a pretty good 2-D platformer, **R⁶⁴** then give this a look.

2nd opinion

WELL, IT'S GOT THE WORLD'S LEAST INTUITIVE CONTROL SYSTEM, FOR A START. PUSH A BUTTON TO TURN AROUND? BUH! IT'S A HARD GAME, BUT A LOT OF THE TIME IT'S HARD BECAUSE IT'S UNFAIR, WITH TRAPS THAT WILL ALWAYS KILL YOU FIRST TIME BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW THEY'RE THERE. NICE IDEA, BUT TOO CLUMSILY EXECUTED TO WORK WELL. **ANDY McDERMOTT**

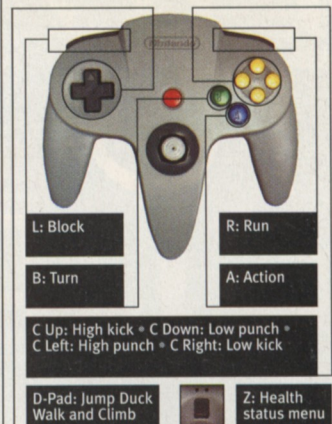


SUB-ZERO FINDS THE NETHEREALM'S COMMANDO ASSAULT COURSE JUST TOO MUCH FOR HIM, AND STOPS FOR A REST AT THE TYRE OBSTACLE.



THE GAMEPLAY IN *MKM:SZ* IS MORE THAN JUST BEATING PEOPLE UP. HERE, SUB-ZERO MUST FREEZE THE MONK ON THE FLOOR PANEL TO OPEN THE DOOR ON THE RIGHT.

64 THE BOTTOM LINE magazine Controls



Alternatives

Mischief Makers: Nintendo (import)
Reviewed: Issue 7, 85%
Mace: The Dark Age: Midway (import)
Reviewed: Issue 7, 76%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall



75

Soundbite: CONVOLUTED, TRICKY AND VERY, VERY GORY – AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT PLATFORMER WHICH SHOULD KEEP YOU GOING FOR A LONG TIME!

Ninfo

Players



Cartridge



Controller Pak



Publisher:
Developer:

EA Sports
EA Sports

Game Type:
Origin:

Football sim
Canada

Release Date:
Price:

Out now
£59.99

FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98

Memory Options

MEMORY:
None
CONTROLLER PAK:
Save
Tournament
Progress and
Edited Players



\$64,000 Question

- EXCELLENT SMOOTH, DETAILED GRAPHICS
- GREAT MANAGEMENT OPTION
- VERY FAST GAMEPLAY
- RESPONSIVENESS STILL NOT PERFECT
- COMMENTARY QUICKLY GETS REPETITIVE

Can EA Sports **RECOVER** from the **EMBARRASSMENT** of *FIFA 64*? Kinda looks that **WAY!**

Every single aspect of

FIFA: Road To World Cup '98



CHelsea ARE GETTING DESPERATE - THEY'VE JUST HIRED THE BLOKE WHO SELLS *THE BIG ISSUE* OUTSIDE STANFORD BRIDGE!



NOW THEN YOUNG MAN, GET YOUR SHEEPSKIN COAT ON AND TAKE OVER AS MANAGER.



A PROMISING CORNER KICK FOR ENGLAND. CAN THEY SNEAK ONE PAST THE HUN?

LET'S BE BRUTALLY HONEST - FIFA 64 was so much of a dog it was shedding hair and slobbering. It played so clumsily that it might as well have been programmed in '64! A lot of people had written off the once-proud licence as a result, thinking that it descended into the Hell Of The Sequel Too Far occupied by *Alien Resurrection* and all those *Friday The 13th* films.

EA Sports obviously realised this, and rather than just knock out another lacklustre update that would top the charts anyway purely on the basis of the name, they've completely tweaked everything about FIFA and come up with a footy game that's finally worthy of the N64, in the rectangular shape of *FIFA: Road To World Cup '98*. Every single aspect of the game has been improved, from the opening of the game (complete with Blur's 'Song 2' blasting out from your TV and getting you straight into the proper mood) to the animation and responsiveness of the players.

Although it's not an actual World Cup licence, the cunningly titled *FIFA: Road To World Cup '98* might as well be, taking international teams as close as they can get to the actual

final without having some important French bloke handing over the silverware. It's not just World Cup games, though - just about every world league you can think of is included in the game, from the obvious ones like UEFA to regional groupings like the South Pacific's OFC. You can then go down even further, and choose the actual teams that make up the leagues! Taking things to a ridiculously local extreme, you can then edit the teams - and the appearance of the players - so that you can actually jog out onto the pitch alongside Beckham or slam a few balls into the back of Blackburn's net. All that's missing is a way to slap your own face onto one of the players - something for the 64DD version, perhaps?

DIAMOND NIGHTS

Off the pitch, *FIFA '98* offers a hugely comprehensive management option, which is detailed enough that it almost qualifies as a game in its own right. Players from all over the world can be bought and sold, tactics developed and your chosen team generally honed into a world-class side - if you get things right, of course!



IT'S VILLA VERSUS GERMANY DOWN AT THE MUNICIPAL SPORTS CENTRE. GORDON BRITTAS WOULD NEVER APPROVE OF STUDDIED BOOTS ON THAT FLOOR!



GEE THANKS NICK, ANOTHER MASSIVE CAPTION FOR A PICTURE WITH NOT A WHOLE LOT GOING ON! YOU PUT YOUR LEFT LEG IN, YOU TAKE YOUR LEFT LEG OUT...



THE BALL APPEARED TO BE LEAKING A TOXIC YELLOW GAS.

It's actually possible to play *FIFA '98* entirely as a management game. At the start of a match, you're given a controller selection screen - by leaving this in its default position, the match will play itself without any intervention on your part at all. If you don't think your playing skills are up to par, but instead fancy yourself more in the Glenn Hoddle role, this is the one for you. People will look at you funny when you admit to buying a game with the intention of not actually playing in it, though.

Team tactics play a much increased role in *FIFA '98* over its predecessor. Although it's perfectly possible just to jump into the game and start playing, tinkering with formations and strategy can improve your chances of slotting one into the onion bag, and new options like 'man marking' and 'aggression' (now you can turn your whole team into raging psychopaths!) add considerably to the variety of play. If the team are performing badly, you can give them a dressing-down at half time and try to psyche them up for the



IF YOU WANT, YOU CAN PLAY IN AN INDOOR ARENA. THIS MAKES THE GAME MORE LIKE *FIFA: ROAD TO SCHOOL GYM '98!*



AUSTRALIA TAKE ON TONGA IN WHAT PROMISES TO BE THE MOST ONE-SIDED MATCH SINCE BRAZIL VERSUS THE SHETLAND ISLANDS.

the game has been improved

53

more

I'd Like A Mullet, Please

FIFA '98 LETS YOU PLAY PERSONAL IMAGE CONSULTANT FOR ALL OF FOOTBALL'S TOP STARS. LET'S HAVE A GANDER AT WHAT RYAN GIGGS WOULD LOOK LIKE WITH SOME ALTERNATIVE BARNETS...

STANDARD

THIS IS GIGGSY AS THE GAME INITIALLY PRESENTS HIM, SO REALISTIC IT'S SPOOKY!



PERM

IT'S LIKE THE SEVENTIES NEVER WENT AWAY. AWIGHT DAWLIN', I'LL PICK YOU IN ME CAPRI!



FOP

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THAT STYLISH TEENAGE FAVOURITE, THE 'SWISH OF THE CURTAIN'!



RUG

TRENDY SHAVED SIDES MIGHT WORK FOR SOME, BUT FOR GIGGS IT'S LIKE A DOORMAT ON THE BONCE.



SKIIINHEEEAD!

WITH THE RUG NOT WORKING OUT, HE MIGHT AS WELL GO THE WHOLE HOG FOR THAT MILWALL SUPPORTER LOOK.



SUEDEHEAD

BEING BASED IN MANCHESTER, GIGGS COULD TAKE SOME HAIRSTYLING ADVICE FROM MORRISSEY.



GRANT MITCHELL

AARGH, SCARY! A QUICK BUZZ WITH THE ELECTRIC RAZOR AND ANYONE CAN LOOK LIKE WALFORD'S FAVOURITE SON.



MULLET

WHAT FOOTBALL PLAYER'S LIFE WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT TRYING THIS TONSURIAL TRAVESTY?



QUIFF

A QUICK FLICK UP OF THE FRINGE AND ANYONE CAN LOOK LIKE THE KING OF ROCK 'N' ROLL.



CREWCUT

THAT 'JUST SIGNED UP WITH THE ROYAL MARINES' LOOK'S ALWAYS A WINNER WITH THE LADIES.



CENTRE PARTING

BELOVED OF MUMS ALL ACROSS THE NATION, BUT NOT OF THE SONS THEY INFLECT IT UPON.



MR SPOCK

OR AS IT'S BETTER KNOWN IN PLAYGROUNDS, THE 'BOWLY'. PLACE BOWL ON HEAD AND START TRIMMING!



SHEARER GETS READY TO SLOT ONE HOME FOR THE 'TOON.



FOR FANS OF SENSIBLE SOCCER, YOU CAN VIEW THE ACTION FROM THE GOODYEAR BLIMP!



"HELLO? IS ANYBODY THERE?" IT'S EITHER THE PRACTICE MODE, OR THE WHOLE TEAM HAVE BEEN SENT OFF!



IS THERE SUCH A THING AS A FRIENDLY MATCH WHEN ARSENAL ARE PLAYING SOMEONE?



THE PITCH WAS SO FOGGY, THE PLAYERS WERE AFRAID THEY'D WANDERED INTO TUROK BY MISTAKE!

The posy Frenchman was motion-captured doing his stuff for the benefit of EA Sports' computers, and it pays off. Having fully animated players does cause some annoyances from time to time, because there are occasional points in the game when it

FIFA: Road To World Cup '98

second half by whacking up their aggression and sending them back out there with a red haze in front of their eyes. You just have to hope that they don't end up seeing too many red cards as well!

When you actually start to play a game, the first thing you notice is how much the graphics have been improved over FIFA 64. It's probably hard to tell here, because PAL machines and our video grabbers still don't get on quite as well as they ought to, but FIFA's use of a non-standard graphics mode gives everything a look rarely seen on the N64. It's still not pin-sharp by any means, but it's far better than the Coke-bottle glasses effect of old.

The animation of the players is much better than it was; if you think that everyone's got the moves of David Ginola, it's because they have!

seems like you have to wait for a particular animation sequence to finish before you can regain full control of your player. It's especially apparent when you're trying to make tight turns, where what should be a single smooth movement feels like move-turn-move-turn-move. This time lag is short, but just noticeable enough when it happens to be irritating.

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES

The animation isn't the only thing that's better about FIFA '98. The players are now a lot more controllable than the hobbling pensioners of old, and the drastically improved control system now lets you pass the ball about with some degree of accuracy, rather than just hoofing it up the pitch and hoping for the best.



ANOTHER THRILLING INDOOR ARENA SHOT COMPLETELY STUMPED THE CAPTION WRITER'S POWERS OF CREATIVITY.

FIFA: Road To World Cup '98



THE KEEPER MAKES A SAVE AS THE OPPOSITION CHARGE IN TO STAMP HIM INTO THE TURF.

It's much more of a passing game than it used to be, and is a lot more fun as a result.

Although the intelligence of the opposition has been improved, they thankfully aren't the invincible supermen that some football games



EN-GER-LAND ATTEMPT TO BEND ONE PAST THE GERMAN DEFENCE. MIND YER NUTS, FRITZ!

is polished in every way...

over the years have provided. The keepers aren't infallible, and providing you're quick enough on your feet you can get shots past them from all distances without having to resort to the little slippy kicks and specific tight angles that often plague soccer sims.

A very good new addition to the game is the on-screen directional arrow that accompanies corners, free kicks and dead balls. The arrow itself is pointed at its target with the analogue stick, while the Z and R buttons bend it so you can belt out curve balls without messing around with aftertouch. Although some people might not like it in a multi-player game, on the grounds that it gives away your intentions, it makes things a lot easier for the player taking the kick – which is as it should be, as they're meant to have the advantage!

FIFA '98 is so much better than FIFA 64 that it's hard to believe that they're actually part of the same series. From

the more varied chatter of the commentators (Motty, Des and Andy Grey) to the extremely in-depth management options, FIFA '98 is polished in every way. But is it as good as Konami's *International Superstar Soccer 64*? Well... not quite. *ISS 64* still pips the new FIFA in playability, because the game flows that crucial bit more smoothly, and despite FIFA '98 using a higher resolution, *ISS* seems just a little bit clearer on screen. On the other hand, FIFA's management and customisation options and more up-to-date teams, as well as its greater variety of camera angles and familiar commentators, might tip the balance back for some people, and unlike *ISS* versus FIFA 64,

there isn't a huge difference in playability. Plus there's the rather obvious point that FIFA '98 is cheaper!

Which you buy is up to you, of course. But for the first time in ages, you won't be falling for the old trap of 'big licence over gameplay' if you buy FIFA '98. If you want to take your home team to the World Cup, you can't go wrong with this!

R64

2nd opinion

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER 64 STILL RULES THE FOOTBALLING ROOST AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, BUT FIFA: ROAD TO WORLD CUP '98 IS A LOT CLOSER TO IT THAN ITS PREDECESSOR. FIFA'S A GOOD GAME, BUT ISS IS BETTER. AT THIS RATE, IT'S LOOKING GOOD FOR FIFA '99 THOUGH – BETTER RESERVE YOUR COPY NOW! LOZ COOPER



MAN U'S STRIKER WAS ABOUT TO TRIP OVER THE HUGE SIGN SOMEONE HAD LOBBED ONTO THE PITCH.



ANIMATION IS IMPROVED IN ALL PARTS OF THE GAME, RIGHT DOWN TO THROW-INS. CHEERS, GINOLA!

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

ISS 64: Konami (£64.99)
Reviewed: Issue 3, 93%
FIFA 64: EA Sports (£29.99)
Reviewed: Issue 2, 25%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

%

85

Soundbite:
UP THERE WITH THE BEST – FOOTBALL'S DEFINITELY COMING HOME!

55





SOME SWINE HAD GLUED THE PLAYERS TO GIANT SUBBUTEO BASES.



"HAS ANYONE SEEN MY CONTACTS?" WAILED THE KEEPER.

Ninfo	Players	Cartridge	64 M.	Publisher:	Konami	Game Type: ⚽	Sports sim	Release Date:	Out now
					Developer:	Konami	Origin:	Japan	Price:

HOOFING the ball on a brand NEW pitch... or IS it?



THIS LOOKS AN AWFUL LOT LIKE THE FORMATION SCREEN. 5-3-2? 4-4-2? 8-1-1? YOU DECIDE!

WORLD SOCCER 3



THERE HAS YET TO BE A football game to better the all-round package that was served up in the form of *J-League Perfect Striker*, alias *International Superstar Soccer 64*. It had everything – gorgeous graphics, hyperactive commentary, goals that could be scored from seemingly

impossible angles, back-room management, long-term challenge (if you tweaked the difficulty level) and frantic, addictive multi-player action that led to many a square-up, stand-off situation in the office!

Well this new updated version has now been released in Japan... possibly to start the build up to next year's

World Cup finals in France (Japan did just qualify by the skin of their teeth after all), or possibly to make more money. Whatever the reason for this package, we can at least expect

World Soccer

Memory Options

MEMORY: NONE
CONTROLLER PAK: SAVES EDITED PLAYERS AND COMPETITION STANDINGS

\$64,000 Question

- ➕ STILL THE BEST OF THE BUNCH.
- ➕ SUPERB GRAPHICS.
- ➕ UNBEATABLE GAMEPLAY.
- ➕ LOTS TO DO AND LEARN.
- ➕ GREAT FOR MULTIPLAYER ACTION.
- ➖ THERE'S NO POINT IN BUYING IT!



MARCO KICKED THE BALL SO HARD THAT HIS LEG TORE OFF AT THE HIP AND FLEW OFF ACROSS THE PITCH.



THE HUNT FOR THE KEEPER'S LOST CONTACT LENS CONTINUED, THE ENGLAND SQUAD KINDLY OFFERING TO HELP.



A CHANCE FOR THE DUTCH TO GO ONE-UP ENDS IN BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT AS THE GOON UP-FRONT SKIES IT!

something different to line the pocket of all those importers, can't we?

Well, if the truth be told, if you own a European or American version of *ISS 64* then you're be a mad fool to part with your cash for this, because when all is said and done, this is just that version in Japanese!

GIVE ME A J

If you recall, the original Japanese version featured the club teams that comprise the famed J-League (the Jap equivalent of the Premiership; Gary Lineker once played there), and the players actually looked like their real-life counterparts, if you could honestly tell the difference! The



donned wigs after narrowly escaping the Roswell crash!

The problem here is that the *J-League* version was always better than the *International* version, and instead of keeping the gameplay of

Show Some Skill, Flyboy!

NO OTHER GAME HAS QUITE THE AMOUNT OF DEPTH AND VERSATILITY OF THE *ISS* GAMES. JUST CHECK OUT THE WEALTH OF NIFTY TRICKS YOU CAN DO. THESE WOULD IMPRESS ANY TALENT SCOUT, IF ONLY YOU COULD DO THEM FOR REAL!



the Japanese version and porting over the different teams, Konami have opted to cut all the corners and go for the straight re-hash. What a pity. Sure, there were annoying aspects in the Japanese version, such as the frustrating break in play when the ref issued a booking, and the way in which you could always score by going around



3 really is a treat for football fans!

Western countries were treated to International squads, and players that looked suspiciously like they had just





UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE WORLD CUP HOLDERS, ARGENTINA ARE FORCED INTO PASSING PLAY TO GAIN GROUND.



TOM G (WHO?) FROM JAPANESE RADIO STATION KISS-FM KOBE INTRODUCES THE GAMES AND RANTS CONSTANTLY THROUGHOUT.



GET ONSIDE YA BUGGER! A CHANCE OPENS FOR BRAZIL, BUT WILL THEY CAPITALISE ON IT?

the keeper. But for some reason, many of the good points were also altered beyond recognition in the translation. This is especially noticeable when trying to attempt those rip-roaring, crowd-pleasing scorers from way out that stole a victory in the dying seconds and made the scorer feel elated in a way unfeasible without a huge lottery win or a large quantity of drugs.

Attempting such a feat in this version results in a piss-poor feeble shot that always seems to fly towards goal at chest-height... and hardly ever finds the back of the net.

ANDY GREY, NO WAY!

Other alterations are more subtle, but if you are a aficionado of the Japanese original, they grate and become apparent in no time. The welcome

changes are the speeded up set-pieces, the improved AI of the computer players and the fact that it is much harder to round the keeper. Free kicks are also harder. Whereas before you could effortlessly chip the ball over the wall and into the blind top-corner (provided your aim was accurate), now you must contend with the jumping wall of players that can, and will, block the shot if you don't apply enough height.

As a game in its own right, *World Soccer 98* is a rewarding enough experience. If you are familiar with the

The area in which this game originally triumphed over the competition was in the sheer depth and versatility of the play. It has everything, in fact it even pioneered the 'through-ball' feature that has been emulated as a mark of respect in many of the recent offerings, *FIFA: Road To World Cup '98* included. It also allows you to shimmy, jiggle, flick, and loads of other footballing terms that you've probably never heard of! The analogue control ensures that no move is too tight to pull off and weaving in between



WRONG FOOTED! THE REPLAY CLEARLY SHOWS THAT THE UNFORTUNATE GOALIE DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE OF SAVING THIS CLOSE-RANGE DRIVE!

The players look like they after es

English version then you'll be able to find your way around the options easily enough. The actual atmosphere of the matches is heightened significantly by the barking commentators (updated from the original Jap version, and now featuring the MC talents of Tom G from Kiss-FM KOBE) who get right on one whenever the action gathers momentum. Let's face it, Johnny Serious on the English version made the games out to be about as interesting as Steve Davis' potting shed!

defenders is made easy with nimble, sensitive controls. Defending is also a satisfying affair due to the trips, shoves and even punches that can be used as a last resort (although often penalised by eagle-eyed refs!). The experience is made better in multi-player mode as you can turn provider as well as scorer and set-up your team mate with precision, Beckham-like crosses that can be easily manipulated via after-touch in the air to find their intended target.

Eat My Shorts!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TALENT COIN IS THE LESS SKILFUL APPROACH THAT HAS RUINED MANY A CAREER. THIS IS THAT OF THE FOOTBALL HOOLIGAN, A PERSON WHO WILL LITERALLY STOP AT NOTHING TO FLAW THE OPPOSITION OR GET A BOOKING, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST!



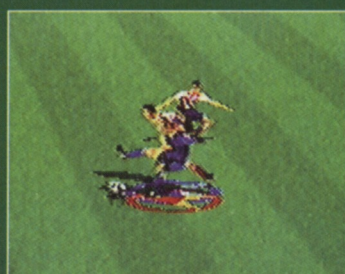
TRIP

I WAS NOWHERE NEAR HIM, GUV'NOR!



SHOVE

NOW WE'RE TALKING LAWSUITS!



BARGE

WHAT? HE JUST RAN INTO ME!



SLIDING TACKLE

PASSABLE AT BEST, LIFE THREATENING AT WORST!



TENSIONS TAUT AND EXPECTATIONS HIGH, THE TOSS OF A COIN DECIDES WHO WILL KICK OFF THIS HISTORIC BATTLE! LOOKS LIKE KONAMI HAVE MINTED THEIR OWN!

NET PROFITS

The goals themselves are a varied bunch ranging from the conventional run and shoot, to the slightly bizarre pinball-type affairs that somehow bounce over the line. Sure, there are pre-set methods of scoring, but there are plenty of others to try out and utilise to keep things varied, and of course variety is so important in a football game. The only thing that this game is missing (we think) is a training option to test and fine-tune set pieces and soccer skills prior to the big games. If you can cast your mind back to the original SNES

Donned wigs caping the Roswell crash!

version of *Superstar Soccer*, it featured a wealth of training challenges which you tackled as best you could, and were then scored accordingly. It also had scenarios whereby you could be chucked straight into a championship final *Quantum Leap* style, only to find that your team is down with only minutes to go – your job being to turn the



THERE'S A SCRAMBLE IN THE BOX, SEAMEN FAILS TO SMOTHER THE ITALIAN SHOT AND THE 'SILVER FEATHER' CLOSES IN FOR THE KILL!

tables in the time allocated and win the damn thing. Such features would be welcome here to enhance the longevity further, but perhaps I'm just being picky!

World Soccer 3 really is a treat for football fans – even lonely no-mates can gain satisfaction by competing in the various leagues and cups on offer, although in our opinion the difficulty levels seem a bit erratic, going from

excitement and challenge to keep footie fans going for months, but the only real significant problem with this version is that there is absolutely no point in buying it! Those owning European N64's will no doubt have the official version which is identical, and import owners will own the original Japanese *J-League* version which is better. Still, if there are any Japanese gamers out there reading this, and who want to guide their International troop of battlers through to World Cup glory, then by all means go for it!

2nd opinion

HARD TO THINK OF WHAT TO SAY ABOUT *WORLD SOCCER 3*, REALLY. IT'S BASICALLY *ISS 64* WITH A JAPANESE FLAVOUR TO IT, SO IT'S AS GOOD TO PLAY AS *ISS*, STILL THE BEST FOOTBALL SIM EVER. BUT LIKE RYAN SAYS, THERE'S NO POINT BUYING IT WHEN YOU CAN HAVE *ISS*! LOZ COOPER



THE GOALIE IS OFF HIS LINE AND WON'T HAVE A PRAYER OF SAVING THIS BRAZILIAN THUNDER SHOT!



CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES C'MON! TURKEY SAVOUR THE MOMENT OF A RARE GOAL (PROBABLY AN OWN ONE!).

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

FIFA '98: EA Sports (£59.99)
Reviewed: Issue 9, 85%
ISS 64: Konami (£64.99)
Reviewed: Issue 3, 93%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

86%

Soundbite:

STILL THE BEST FRANCHISE, BUT THIS VERSION IS REALLY FOR JAPANESE PLAYERS ONLY.

59



Ninfo



Publisher:
Developer:

Hudson Soft
Hudson Soft

Game Type:
Origin:

Beat-'em-up
Japan

Release Date: Out now (import)
Price: £69.99

ANOTHER completely ARSE fighting game on the N64? Surely NOT!

DUAL HEROES



WHAT IS IT WITH FIGHTING games and the N64? We had *Clayfighter* last month, which was the most rancid steamer that's ever disgraced Nintendo's console, and now we've got *Dual Heroes*, which isn't much better!

In *Dual Heroes*, you've got eight Power Rangers lookalikes to choose

from, many of them with embarrassing names. Because I don't know any Japanese I don't know why they're fighting, but it's probably something to do with overthrowing injustice – it usually is. If they all just teamed up instead of kicking the crap out of each other it'd make the job a lot easier, but all those blows to the head can't be good for the brain.

few special attacks just by button-bashing. It doesn't work in *Dual Heroes*, because the characters don't have enough moves. You end up just doing a series of weedy kicks and punches (the block function is so useless it might as well not be there), with the occasional unexpected spinning kick.

It doesn't really matter how bad a

As challenging as arm-wr

The style of play is a complete rip-off of Sega's *Virtua Fighter* games. You've got a kick button, a punch button and a block button, and every move is done with combinations of these. It works perfectly in the *Virtua Fighter* games because the characters have loads of moves, and even inexperienced players can pull off a

player you are, because it's almost impossible to lose. Just keep on crouching down and alternating between punches and kicks, and this will see you through to the final boss every time! Because of this easiness, there's practically no replay value at all.

Dual Heroes does offer one new gimmick – it has a 'virtual gamer' feature, where you can fight against one of five different pseudo-people. Although the actual enemies you come up against are the same, the fighting style is different depending on who you choose to fight against. The differences between the virtual gamers are noticeable – some are a lot more aggressive than others – but it doesn't have that much of an effect on how easy the game is. You can still take down the three boss characters – Gyn, Zorr and Gexorr – without using any continues, unless you're either unlucky or totally inept. It's as challenging as arm-wrestling Steven Hawking.

GO GO POWER RANGERS... PLEASE!

The game can't even manage to look good. *Dark Rift* might have been as dull as a Saga holiday in Penge, but at least it managed some decent visual



YEP, YOU'RE SEEING IT RIGHT – THOSE REALLY ARE HOW BIG THE BORDERS ARE. AND THIS IS THE JAPANESE VERSION!



THE FIVE INITIAL 'VIRTUAL GAMERS', JUST LIKE THE ONES DOWN THE ARCADE. THERE ARE SOME GHOSTED-OUT HIDDEN ONES AS WELL. WHOOPEE.

Memory Options

MEMORY: NONE
CONTROLLER PAK: SAVES VICTORIES AND OPTIONS



\$64,000 Question

- + DECENT ANIMATION
- WAY TOO EASY
- GARISH GRAPHICS
- BLAND SONICS
- LIMITED MOVES



BY HAMMERING THE B BUTTON, THE CHARACTERS CAN POWER THEMSELVES UP AND TURN INTO METAL FIGHTERS. WHY? 'CAUSE IT LOOKS COOL.

Dual Heroes



GAI

He's A: FIRE HERO
His Day Job Is: SPACE PILOT.
He Comes From: NEO-TOKIO
He Looks Like: A POWER RANGER

GUN

He's A: MILITARY SOLDIER (IS THERE ANY OTHER SORT?)
His Day Job Is: SPACY SOLDIER, MAAAN
He Comes From: GUINBACH
He Looks Like: LORD BUCKETHEAD



HANA

She's A: CUTIE CHASER
Her Day Job Is: BOTANIST
She Comes From: SOUTH AUSTREIRA (WHUH?)
She Looks Like: A CHEERLEADER

HOE

He's A: DRAGON KUNG-FU, APPARENTLY
His Day Job Is: MILLIONAIRE (AND GIT)
He Comes From: PONG-KONG
He Looks Like: A DESPATCH RIDER



JUIE

He's A: BIONIC BEAST
His Day Job Is: UNKNOWN
He Comes From: FLOATING CONTINENT
He Looks Like: AN IRATE KANGAROO

RETSU

He's A: SUPER NINJA
His Day Job Is: CYBORG ASSASSINATOR
He Comes From: NEO-TOKIO
He Looks Like: JUDGE DREDD IN PANTALOONS



KUMO

She's A: DANCING LADY
Her Day Job Is: ERM, DANCER
She Comes From: ESPARIWOOD
She Looks Like: A LAP DANCER IN A CRASH HELMET

ZEN

He's A: DIRTY FIGHTER
His Day Job Is: COMMANDER (OF WHAT?)
He Comes From: ZODGIERRA! (DUNNO WHY IT'S SHOUTED)
He Looks Like: HE'S BEEN IN THE FRIDGE TOO LONG



nestling Steven Hawking!

effects. *Dual Heroes* has eye-hurting arenas with a minimum of detail, surrounded by blurry backgrounds that look like they've been painted by a second-year art class. The only good point about the fighters is the animation, but when it's motion captured from a real person it's hard to go wrong. The textures on their bodies are another matter, as they're just as blurred as the backgrounds and don't look much cop even when the fighters are some way from the camera, never mind in close-up!

The ultimate visual insult appears at the top and bottom of the screen – the game has borders. Huge, PAL *Pilotwings*-size borders. God knows

why – it's not as if there's a lot of detail to slow things down. The three year old *Toshinden* on the PlayStation completely humiliates *Dual Heroes*!

Even the sound's lousy. Combat noises are limited to clanks, thuds and the odd grunt, and the music is blippy-bloppy Japanese stuff that could have come from a SNES. It's not quite bad enough to be annoying, but nobody's going to be walking down the street humming Gai's victory theme, put it that way.

Dual Heroes is a complete waste of space. The combination of enclosed arenas (with electrified, power-draining walls) and open arenas (with ring-outs) usually means that you

Dual Zeroes

JOIN THE DUAL HEROES! WEAR POWERED ARMOUR! SPEAK JAPLISH! LOOK LIKE A COMPLETE NONCE! YOU TOO CAN FIGHT THE FORCES OF EVIL, BUT IF THIS LOT ARE THE BEST GOOD'S GOT TO OFFER, IT'S PROBABLY BETTER THAT THE BLACK HATS WIN.

don't beat the other guy with clever moves, but by pushing them towards the edge and waiting for them to fry or fall off. They even sometimes do this themselves without you having to lift a finger! Because it's supposedly based on a Japanese TV show or something, Hudson Soft must be hoping that fans will buy *Dual Heroes* without waiting to see any reviews. Let's face it, it's the only way anyone *would* buy it.

DUAL HEROES WAS SUPPLIED BY THE VIDEO GAME CENTRE, (01202) 527314.

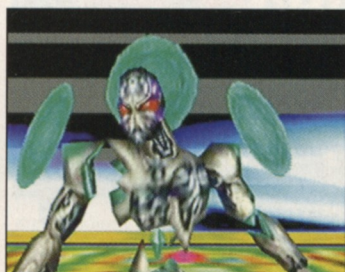
R64

2nd opinion

I ALWAYS TRY TO LOOK FOR THE BEST IN GAMES, AND SO FOR *DUAL HEROES* I CAN SAFELY SAY... ER, THE COLOURS ARE QUITE NICE. I HAVE TO AGREE WITH LOZ ON THIS – THE GAME IS AWFUL! I MEAN, ANY GAME THAT YOU CAN FINISH IN FIFTEEN MINUTES USING ONLY A LEG SWEEP IS NOT WORTH THE ASKING PRICE, UNLESS THE ASKING PRICE IS ABOUT 57 PENCE. **ROY KIMBER**



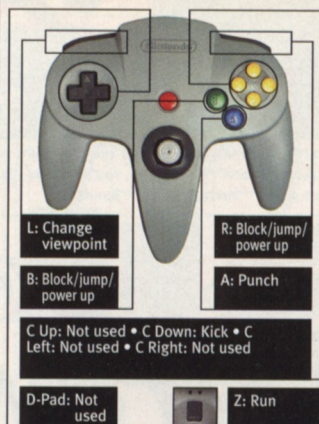
GYN IS THE FIRST BOSS YOU'LL MEET. CROUCH DOWN AND KICK HIM INTO OBLIVION, LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IN THE GAME!



THIS HANDSOME FELLOW IS GEXORR, THE FINAL BOSS. HE LIVES INSIDE ZORR, THE PREVIOUS BOSS, TO AVOID COUNCIL TAX.



Controls



Alternatives

Mace: The Dark Age: Midway (import)
Reviewed: Issue 7, 76%
Killer Instinct Gold: Nintendo (£59.99)
Reviewed: Issue 3, 70%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

%

28

Soundbite:
NOT QUITE AS BAD AS *CLAYFIGHTER*... BUT NOT FAR OFF!



AND IT'S NINJA AND HANNIBAL ON THE MAT: "HEY, YOU'RE ON MY LEG - GET OFF!" "NO I'M NOT, YOU'RE ON MY LEG!" "I CAN'T MOVE!" "NEITHER CAN I!" "BUGGER!"



'THE UNKNOWN'? WHAT KIND OF A NAME IS THAT? YOU'VE GOT TO BE THE 'UNKNOWN SOMETHING'. YOU CAN BE THE 'UNKNOWN CABLE REPAIR GUY'.



ONE NEAT ASPECT OF THE GAME IS THE ABILITY TO PLAY AS ALTERNATIVE VERSIONS OF THE SAME PLAYER. HERE WE HAVE SYXX AND SYXX - WHICH MAKES TWELVE!

Ninfo



Publisher:
Developer:

THQ
Asmik

Game Type:
Origin:

Wrestling
US
Release Date: Out now (import)
Price: £54.99

WCW VS NWO WORLD TOUR

AMAZING! An N64 game that's actually **MORE** realistic than the **SPORT** it's based on!
WHATEVER next?



EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT

American wrestling is faked, well, everybody except possibly most of the people in the United States. Take the things that happen, for example; people get hit with chairs, members of the audience leap into the ring and hammer wrestlers five times their size. Even

just watching closely the fairly normal fighting that goes on can reveal the total lack of any realism, as when one wrestler slaps feebly at another, who in turn performs a triple backflip and goes down as if he'd just been hit by a train!

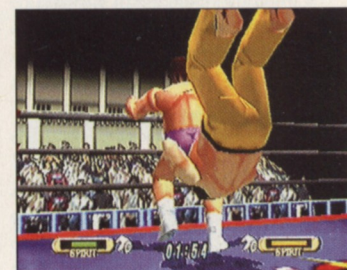
However, despite this fairly ridiculous premise, the whole thing is

just as popular as it ever was. Ask someone who watches it (again, not in America) and they'll more than likely say that they watch it precisely because it is so ridiculous and they only watch it to see what crazy thing will happen next. Which is fair enough.

Wrestling has always been a subject for video games, and over the years there have been many, some good, most bad, and pretty much all of them featuring Hulk Hogan. *WCW vs NWO World Tour* is no exception. Er, that is, it features Hulk Hogan, not that it's bad - far from it in fact. For this game, aside from having a title that must be a dyslexic typist's nightmare, is pretty damn good!

KAPOW! THUD!

You can choose wrestlers from four wrestling organisations - the WCW, NWO, DOA and the Independent Union - giving you a total of no fewer than 37 muscle-bound bruisers to choose from, with the promise of hidden characters and end-of-league bosses as you play through.



AND IT'S AN ASTONISHING THROW FROM THE FAT WRESTLER! LOOK AT THAT LARD FLY! LIKE A PINK BLIMP...

Memory Options

MEMORY:
NONE
CONTROLLER PAK:
SAVE GAME
PROGRESS AND
PREFERENCES



\$64,000 Question

- HUGE 3-D RENDERED WRESTLERS
- SMOOTH ANIMATION
- RESPONSIVE CONTROLS
- RATHER DUBIOUS CROWD EFFECTS



HULK HOGAN, HAVING BEEN BEATEN IN THE BATTLE ROYAL, GRABS A CHAIR FROM THE CROWD TO SORT OUT THE FAT BLOKE WHO SAT ON HIM EARLIER.

Batter opponents to death with heavy c

WCW vs NWO World Tour

And In The Red Corner...

WCW

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING. THE BIG BOYS. OLDEST OF THE WRESTLING ORGANISATIONS (EXCEPT PERHAPS THE WWF, BUT WE DON'T TALK ABOUT THEM) THE WCW ARE THE TRADITIONALISTS, AS CAN BE SEEN BY THEIR GENERAL FIGHTING STYLES.



DOA

DEAD OR ALIVE. ANOTHER FAIRLY NEW ORGANISATION WITH A PRETTY WEIRD NAME – STILL, IT'S BETTER THAN DEAD ON ARRIVAL I GUESS... THIS APPEARS TO BE THE ORGANISATION FOR FAT WRESTLERS, PRESUMABLY HOW THEY GOT THEIR NAME: "OH NO! THE FAT BLOKE JUST BODY-SLAMMED LITTLE BOB! HOW IS HE? DEAD OR ALIVE?"



NWO

NEW WORLD ORDER. A NEWER ORGANISATION THAN THE WCW, THESE CHAPS ALL DRESS IN BLACK AND WANDER AROUND LOOKING MEAN. THE SQUEAKY-CLEAN HULK 'I'VE GOT YELLOW PANTS' HOGAN IS CURRENTLY A MEMBER, NOW SPORTING A DANGEROUS-LOOKING BLACK OUTFIT AND STUBBLE. WRESTLING BEING A LOT LIKE HOLLYWOOD COWBOY FILMS, THESE GUYS WEAR BLACK, HENCE THEY'RE 'BADDIES'.



INDEPENDENT UNION

NOTHING TO DO WITH THE FORMER USSR (AT LEAST I DON'T THINK SO), THE INDEPENDENT UNION MEMBERS SEEM TO HAVE A PENCHANT FOR THE WEIRDER COSTUMES, PARTICULARLY ONES WITH MASKS. THIS MEANS MANY OF THESE WRESTLERS ARE UNPOPULAR ONES FROM OTHER ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE BEING 'RECYCLED', HENCE THE SECRET IDENTITIES.



If you are one of those who watch wrestling, for whatever reason – you don't have to explain yourself to us – then you'll probably be aware that all the wrestlers have their own particular specialities when it comes to moves. This is what has made many past wrestling games a little disappointing, in that no matter which wrestler you used, they all had the same moves and mannerisms. With WCW, every wrestler has his own specific range of moves, just like the ones on TV! The only difference is that in the game they don't pull their punches.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the game has to be the illegal moves. After all, this is what made American wrestling so popular in the first place, isn't it? It's all very well doing clothes-lines and flying body-slams, but if you can't grab a foreign object from the crowd and smack the other wrestlers over the head with it, then where's the fun?

As far as the actual matches go, there are more fighting modes than you can shake a stick at, or even a chair... or, on one memorable occasion, a baseball bat (what kind of weirdo wrestling fan brings a baseball bat to a wrestling match anyway?)

SWEATY GUSSETS

In addition to their normal moves, and of course the ability to batter opponents to death with heavy objects, the wrestlers all have super-special moves. These specials can be used when the wrestler's 'spirit meter' is built up to full, at which point it'll flash 'special' at you to let you know to go for it. The spirit meter can be increased in two ways – the



IT'S THE OLD LEG-LOCK MOVE! C'MON, YOU CAN GET OUT OF THAT ONE! WELL, YOU CAN, CAN'T YOU? PLEASE? I'VE GOT A TENNER ON THIS...

first, and most obvious way, is by beating seven bells out of the opposition, which raises your levels and lowers his. However, you can also increase your spirit by appealing to the crowd – okay, let's be frank, you strike a pose. Do this, particularly after you've just pulled off some spectacular throw, and the crowd goes wild, your spirit meter shoots up, and your head expands to twice its normal size (okay, that last bit's a lie).

Speaking of the crowd – they are a little disappointing. Presumably all the work went into the wrestlers themselves – which is as it should be – but this has resulted in a crowd which, as someone in the office observed, looks like a rather bad painting by Monet. The first row of the crowd you see are fairly standard cut-outs – okay, nothing very exciting, but no problem. The subsequent rows though, are some kind of mutant creation that looks a little like one of those 'Magic Eye' pictures might if it moved about a lot. Stare at them for too long and you can almost see three penguins playing football!

This is pretty much the only fault this game has though. The most fun to be had is in the aforementioned Battle



IF YOU RECKON THAT TAKING WRESTLERS ONE-ON-ONE IS TOO EASY, THEN HOW ABOUT YOU VERSUS TWO OTHERS? AND THEY WILL CHEAT!

Royal mode, where four players – in any combination of human and CPU control – can bash hell out of each other. It's just manic!

With the massive range of wrestlers, the choice of several gaming modes, and a range of hidden boss characters, this game will keep you going for ages. Although it's not strictly a beat-'em-up – it's more of a 'grab-'em-and-roll-around-on-the-floor-with-'em-up' – it does fit into the same general category, and that being so, it's fair to say that WCW vs NWO World Tour is the best of the bunch to reach the N64 so far.

WCW vs NWO WORLD TOUR WAS SUPPLIED BY SKILL ACADEMY, (0181) 567 9174.

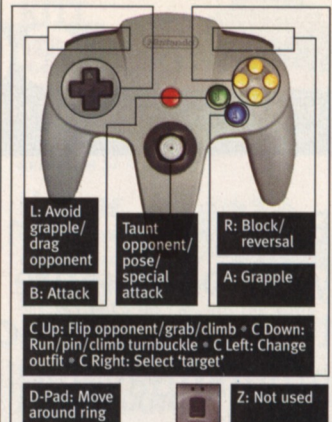
R64

2nd opinion

CONSIDERING HOW BAD WRESTLING GAMES HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST I WAS ALL PREPARED TO HATE THIS, BUT IT'S TURNED OUT TO BE REALLY RATHER GOOD! ONE-PLAYER MODE HAS ITS MOMENTS, BUT IT'S OBVIOUSLY AT ITS BEST AS A FOUR-PLAYER GRUNTATHON. IT MIGHT NOT BE A TRUE BEAT-'EM-UP, BUT IT'S WELL WORTH A LOOK. **ANDY McDERMOTT**

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

Mace: The Dark Age: Midway (import)
Reviewed: Issue 7, 76%
Killer Instinct Gold: Nintendo £59.99
Reviewed: Issue 3, 70%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

%

85

Soundbite:
SMOOTH, VIOLENT, HUMOROUS AND FUN!
THE BEST ALMOST-A-BEAT-'EM-UP SO FAR!

63



SAN FRANCISCO

Ninfo



Publisher: Midway Game Type: Arcade Racer Release Date: Out now (import)
Developer: Midway Origin: USA Price: £59.99

64

BIZARRE! A racing game where you spend more time in the **AIR** than on the **TRACK!** What next? A ground-based flight sim?



SAN FRANCISCO RUSH IS...

well, a race game (there's a bit of a clue in the title I guess). It's fast, it's colourful, it's... airborne!

For that's the first thing that you



I THINK I MIGHT HAVEN MISJUDGED THAT LAST JUMP, EVER SO SLIGHTLY. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

will notice about *SF Rush* (actually, I tell a lie, the first thing you'll notice is probably the graphics, but more on that in a moment). Anyone who's seen the old US cop show *The Streets Of San Francisco* will know that this particular city is what you might tactfully call 'a little bit hilly' and not the sort of place you'd want to do a Sunday paper round, and the streets of *SF Rush* are no exception! You'll find that you can barely turn a corner without going up or down a hill, and that makes for some very, well... 'aerial' gameplay.

VISUALLY... STUNNING?

As for the graphics... Well, they're, um, 'colourful' and, er... okay, I've got to say it, they look like they've been



ported directly onto the N64 from some middle of the road PlayStation game! I mean, when you take a look at something like, for instance, *Automobili Lamborghini*, you'd be hard pressed to match them both to the same console. That said though, the game is fast and furious, and although graphics are obviously important, far more important (no matter what anyone says) is the quality of the gameplay. It's all very well having a game that looks like it's been painted by Leonardo Da Vinci, but that's going to be no fun if it plays like last issue's *Clayfighter 63 1/3*.

And gameplay is where *San Francisco Rush* really takes off – literally! This wasn't immediately apparent, as to begin with the cars handled like they were on rails –

It's fast, it's

that's rails laid in a completely straight line, because the cars just would not turn! Finally, after about an hour of frustratingly yanking the analogue stick right and left only to have the car turn about a centimetre in the required direction and promptly



HMM... NOT WHAT I EXPECTED TO FIND IN THE MIDDLE OF A RACETRACK! STILL, IT ADDS A BIT OF COLOUR, DOESN'T IT? NICE BOXERS BY THE WAY!

Memory Options

MEMORY:
PASSWORD ONLY
CONTROLLER PAK:
SAVES SCORES,
RACING POSITION



\$64,000 Question

- ⊕ FAST
- ⊕ COLOURFUL
- ⊖ GRAPHICALLY A MID-RANGE PLAYSTATION TITLE



WAHEY! I CAN FLY, I CAN FLY! THIS IS ACE, WAIT TILL I TELL MY MUM ABOUT IT! NOW, IF ONLY I COULD WORK OUT HOW TO LAND...

CO RUSH

PLAYER ONE COMES TO A STICKY END, AND PLAYER TWO LOOKS SET TO FOLLOW UNLESS THEY CAN BRAKE FROM 115MPH TO ZERO IN ABOUT SIX FEET.



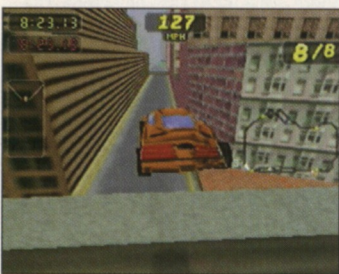
become a fireball upon colliding with some huge building or other, it was back to the manual, where most normal people would have gone in the first place. The manual turned out to be of no use whatsoever

Finally, someone (I forget who, I only know it wasn't me) discovered that by pressing the reverse button whilst turning, the cars performed a kind of handbrake turn, which meant successful negotiations of corners at high speed! Hurrah!

colourful, it's... airborne!

though, as the controls page didn't mention anything about making tighter turns.

We were left on the brink of despair. We knew the game should be good – the idea was there – but the cars just handled so sluggishly!



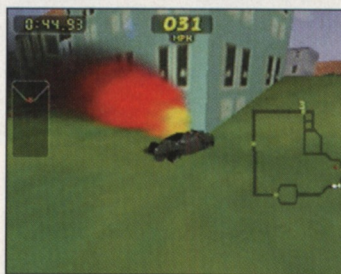
WILL YOU LOOK AT THE STATE OF THAT REAR WING? BLOODY SUNDAY DRIVERS! I'M NEVER GOING TO GET MY DEPOSIT BACK NOW!

NICE LITTLE MOTORS

Anyway, down to basics. You start *SF Rush* with a selection of different vehicles, eight in all, ranging from a basic Ford through a variety of sporty models to some slightly less so, including a VW Beetle and a camper



PLAYER TWO SPOTS PLAYER ONE THANKS TO THE HUGE YELLOW ARROW ABOVE HIS CAR, AND SWITCHES TO 'STEALTH MODE' FOR A SNEAKY ATTACK.



HOW THE HELL DID HE MANAGE TO HIT THAT BUILDING? LOOK AT ALL THE SPACE AROUND IT! DID HIS STEERING FALL OFF OR SOMETHING?

van. All these vehicles come in a variety of bright colours, so if you've always wanted to race a Barbie-pink VW Beetle through San Francisco (and if so, why?) then now's your chance. By collecting the track 'keys' (more on them in a moment) you can also gain access to two extra cars – an American taxi cab, and a hot rod. Apparently (that should probably be allegedly) there is also another car available in circuit mode, which you can access upon winning a circuit, but it never appeared when I won – what a rip!

There are six basic game tracks that lead you through various parts of San Francisco, taking in landmarks like Golden Gate Park, Pacific Heights, Chinatown and Twin Peaks (not the

Car Wars

SF RUSH HAS A LARGE RANGE OF DIVERSE VEHICLES. HOWEVER, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF VEHICLES THAT MIGHT HAVE MADE GOOD ADDITIONS!

KITT

WITH HIS FLASHING BONNET LIGHTS, CAMP VOICE AND PENCHANT FOR JUMPING AROUND ALL OVER THE PLACE, MICHAEL KNIGHT'S CAR KITT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREAT FOR *SF RUSH*.



HERBIE

OKAY, I KNOW THERE'S ALREADY A BEETLE IN IT, BUT HERBIE WAS THE BEETLE (THAT'S THE CAR, NOT THE NOW-DEFUNCT POP QUARTET).



CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

THIS CAR FLEW PRACTICALLY ALL THE TIME. WHAT BETTER WAY OF GETTING THOSE HARD TO REACH KEYS?



THE BATMOBILE

A CAR PACKED FULL OF GADGETS. COULD THERE BE A MORE AMUSING WAY TO DEAL WITH THE OPPOSITION THAN BY FIRING A GRAPPLING HOOK AND CLIMBING A BUILDING WHILST EVERYONE ELSE ENDS UP IN A BURNING HEAP BELOW?



THE TRUCK FROM DUEL

PLOUGH THROUGH THE OPPOSITION, THE BUILDINGS, EVERYTHING IN FACT – YOU'D BE UNSTOPPABLE!



GENERAL LEE

JUMP THE JUMPS, SOUND YOUR HORN, AND MARRY YOUR COUSIN!



THE TAXI FROM WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

THIS CAR CORNERS LIKE... WELL, LIKE A CARTOON CAR THAT CAN BEND IN THE MIDDLE! THE FACT THAT IT CAN TIPTOE THROUGH POOLS OF WATER WOULD PROBABLY COME IN HANDY TOO (WELL, IT MIGHT).



Twin Peaks, a la 'weird-bloke Lynch', surely?) The tracks can also be played in 'backwards' mode, where you race around them in the opposite direction, giving you an extra six tracks, and they can also be mirrored both normally and backwards, giving a total of twenty-four 'different' tracks.



FIND THE HIDDEN RAVINES FOR A BIT OF 'OFF-ROAD ACTION'. CUNNINGLY CONCEALED ROCKS ALLOW YOU TO PERFORM ALL SORTS OF AEROBATIC MANOEUVRES.



THAT SINKING FEELING... ALTHOUGH GETTING ON TOP OF BUILDINGS CAN BE TRICKY, GETTING DOWN AGAIN PROVES TO BE INCREDIBLY SIMPLE. BRACE YOURSELVES EVERYONE!



HA! WHAT A GREAT JUMP! I FLEW FOR ABSOLUTELY MILES! THIS IS AMAZING! I... OH, THAT BUILDING APPEARS TO BE GROWING... OH NO, TURN, TURN! HELP, MUMMY!

66

Scale The Heights

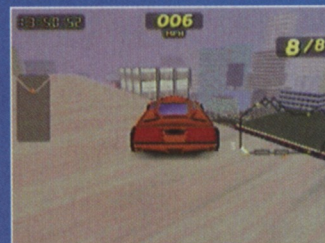
SOMETIMES THE MOST OBVIOUS ROUTE IS NOT ALWAYS THE MOST INTERESTING.



TAKE HERE, FOR INSTANCE. THE LARGE RAMP ON THE RIGHT BOOSTS YOU THROUGH THE BUILDING AND IS A USEFUL SHORT CUT. HOWEVER, TAKE THE SMALLER, LESS SIGNIFICANT-LOOKING ENTRANCE TO THE LEFT, AND YOU'LL GO THROUGH A TUNNEL, OFF A RAMP ONTO ANOTHER RAMP...



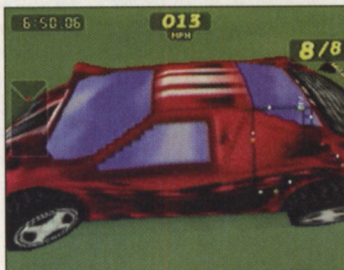
...THEN OFF THAT RAMP ONTO ANOTHER RAMP...



...UNTIL FINALLY YOU END UP HERE, ON THE ROOF OF A HUGE BUILDING. THE ONLY QUESTION IS: WHAT DO YOU DO NOW? THERE'S NOTHING HERE, AND THE ONLY WAY IS... WELL, DOWN!

LET'S KEY HAVIN' YOU

Earlier, I mentioned 'keys'. There are eight of these scattered around on each of the tracks. Some of them are easy to find, others are hidden in obscure locations, such as through fences in ravines, or stashed in concealed caves. Even though some of them can be found fairly easily, the difficult part will be getting to them. They might be hanging in mid-air thirty feet above the track, for



WHAT A GREAT SHOT! YOU CAN SEE ALL THE CONTOURS OF THE CAR FROM THIS ANGLE! BUT HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO SEE WHERE I'M GOING?

example. As mentioned previously, collecting the keys will earn you bonus cars, four for a New York taxi (which looks great in yellow but of course can be any other colour you choose) and eight – which is no easy task, even on the easy tracks – will get you a hot rod. The catch is that when you gain one of these cars, you'll only be able to race it on the track you got it from – which deserves a huge 'boo-sucks' but does mean that there is an incentive to explore all the tracks fully.

You do however, only need to get the car on one version of each track – normal, mirrored, reversed or mirrored and reversed – to get the bonus cars for all four. This is useful, as it means you can play on all four versions of the track when looking for the keys for that track – some keys may be easier to see on certain versions of a track, for example.

So that's the technical aspects of the game. Gameplay

wise, this game is mad! As mentioned already, you'll spend an awful lot of time in the air, and the courses are anything but boring. The cars hammer along the track at breakneck (and breakcar) speed, and the difficulty levels have been well-judged. If you like options (and who doesn't?), then the options screen is packed with 'em, from the aforementioned mirror and backward options, to allowing you to change the degree of fog on the track, which is always useful. Sadly, you can't get rid of the fog completely, because it's another one of those games that has the scenery fade away in the distance so it doesn't have to draw it, but at least it's not as obvious as *Turok*!

BULLITT IN THE HEAD?

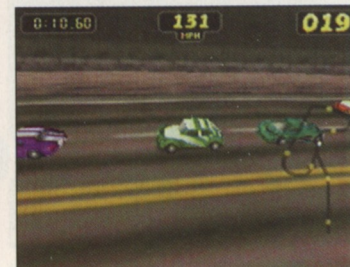
The main disappointment with *SF Rush* is the multiplayer mode,

This game is mad!



AAH... A SCENIC PATH WINDING ITS WAY DOWN A HILL. HOW RELAXING! ALL WE NEED NOW IS A LOAD OF ELDERLY TOURISTS TO RUN OVER!

primarily because it only allows two players. There is also a lesser problem in that the game doesn't seem to be able to handle the amount of traffic on screen as well as it should – by traffic I usually mean graphics, but in this case I actually do mean 'traffic'. If there are a lot of cars on screen, the



HOW IN THE HELL DOES A VOLKSWAGON BEETLE MANAGE TO KEEP UP WITH A TURBO-CHARGED SPORTS CAR? WEIRD!

San Francisco Rush



THIS VW CAMPER VAN IS EASY TO CONTROL, DIFFICULT TO DESTROY AND HAS QUITE A TURN OF SPEED. GREAT FOR BOUNCING OFF WALLS AT HIGH VELOCITY!

game does seem to suffer from slowdown. However, although the speed difference is fairly noticeable if you go straight from a one-player game into a two-player game, on the whole it isn't too detrimental, and the two-player game is just as enjoyable as the one-player version.

One thing that can be annoying in two-player mode is what happens following a crash. In both play modes, when you crash, the computer almost immediately puts you back on the track. However, instead of putting you back where you crashed, you are whisked away down the track, often overtaking your opponents. Presumably this is designed to keep up the pace of the game. In one-player mode it's no problem, but in two-player it's very disconcerting to see the other player crash as you shoot past their burning hulk laughing in triumph, only to have them picked up and whisked off into the distance. It's just not fair! The only consolation is that it works both ways.

San Francisco Rush is a highly enjoyable, fast-paced racing game that makes up for what it lacks in top quality graphics with colourful cars and scenery, and – most importantly – with top-notch gameplay. It may not appeal to those who prefer their driving to be 'real' and 'accurate' (you know the sort, they've got to be driving something that's technically correct down to the last wheel nut and

Did Someone Call For A Cab?

IF YOU'VE EVER SEEN ANY AMERICAN FILMS, THEN YOU'LL PROBABLY BE FAMILIAR WITH THE WAY US TAXICABS DRIVE, AND IF YOU FIND FOUR KEYS AND GET THE TAXI, YOU'LL FIND OUT WHY.



THE TAXI IS FAST, FAIRLY MANOEUVERABLE, AND EXTREMELY ROBUST – IT'LL TAKE A KICKING AND KEEP ON TICKING! AS YOU MIGHT SAY IF YOU WERE AMERICAN... UM, AND A LITTLE SAD.



THE HARBOUR COMES COMPLETE WITH SHIPS... ANOREXIC SHIPS. LET'S FACE IT, WOULD THEY REALLY BE ABLE TO FLOAT?

handles exactly like a real car – but in that case, why not just *drive* a real car?). But if you like your race games fast, furious, and aerobic, then this is the game for you. Fans of games like *Need For Speed 2* on the PlayStation will love it, assuming they've got an N64 that is!

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH WAS SUPPLIED BY SKILL ACADEMY; GET THEM ON (0181) 567 9174.



AS PLAYER TWO HURTLES ROUND THE EMBANKMENT, PLAYER ONE LOOKS IN HIS GLOVE COMPARTMENT FOR A MAP AND COMPLETELY MISSES HIS DIRECTIONAL ARROW.

2nd opinion

HANG ON ROY, YOU'RE SAYING LAMBORGHINI (80% LAST ISH) IS BETTER THAN *SAN FRANCISCO RUSH*? NO IT BLOODY ISN'T! WHEN YOU GET PAST THE INITIALLY CRAP CONTROLS *SFR* BECOMES A LOT MORE FUN TO PLAY, AND ALL THE DIFFERENT COURSE VARIATIONS AND KEYS SHOULD GIVE IT MORE LONGEVITY THAN *LAMBO*. BUY AMERICAN, NOT ITALIAN! LOZ COOPER

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

Automobili Lamborghini: THE Games (£54.99)
Reviewed: Issue 8, 80%
Top Gear Rally: THE Games (£54.99)
Reviewed: Issue 7, 90%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

75%

Soundbite:

FAST, COLOURFUL AND HECTIC – *SAN FRANCISCO RUSH* WILL TAKE YOU FOR THE ROLLERCOASTER RIDE OF YOUR LIFE!

67



TO SHOW YOU WHICH DIRECTION TO GO, THERE ARE BLOODY HUGE YELLOW AND BLACK SIGNS ALL OVER THE PLACE. FOR THOSE OF YOU A BIT SLOW ON THE UPTAKE THOUGH, YOU'LL ALSO GET FLASHING DIRECTIONAL ARROWS FROM TIME TO TIME.

Ninfo



Publisher: Video System USA
Developer: Paradigm Entertainment
Game Type: Shoot-'em-up
Origin: USA
Release Date: Out now (import)
Price: £59.99



THIS HUGE FLYING FORTRESS IS THE FIRST REALLY FORMIDABLE BOSS YOU'LL COME ACROSS. HUGE WING AND FUSELAGE MOUNTED LASERS CAN ZAP YOUR ENERGY WITH ONE SHOT.



LET ME SET THE SCENE...

Terrorists these days being the well-organised but on the whole rather antisocial chaps that they are, a group called Phutta Morgana has mounted a world-wide offensive in a bid to eradicate democracy, freedom of speech and pot noodles.

Your mission, as if you needed to be told, is to stop them – or at least, to wait until they've dealt with the pot noodles and then stop them. To enable you to accomplish this, and in a plot-

line that will have the writer of *Iron Eagle* reaching for his 'Beginners Guide To Plagiarism Law', you are have been given command of a team of elite pilots created by taking the best and brightest members from the world's top airforces.

Initially, you are able to choose from four of the world's deadliest attack aircraft – an A-10 Thunderbolt, an F-14B fighter, a Russian Su-35 and a small jet aircraft called an FSX. Each plane has different flight characteristics, different weapons systems, and different pilots. The handling varies considerably from

AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT had the potential to be a **CRACKING** shoot-'em-up... and it **ALMOST** was.

AERO FIGHTERS

aircraft to aircraft, and you'll find that the effectiveness of the various weapons vary considerably against different targets.

The A-10 on the other hand has line-of-sight rockets, which follow the trajectory they were launched along. Aerial targets are therefore tricky, as

Very reminiscent of the c

GIMME THE GUNS!

The F-14, for example, carries heat-seeking Phoenix missiles, which will split up and pursue the nearest hostile targets. This makes them great for taking out agile airborne opponents like jets and helicopters. However, the random target selection system means you can't choose which targets the missiles will go for, and this makes it difficult when, for example, you're trying to pound a particular target, particularly if it's on the ground as the missiles seem to prioritise air targets.

the missiles will not track them, but slow moving and stationary ground targets can be hammered since the rockets – put simply – will go exactly where you send them. The various capabilities of the different aircraft are suited to different missions, which you'd think would mean you could choose the most appropriate aircraft for each mission – except that you can't swap aircraft between missions! Why not? I mean, what's the point?

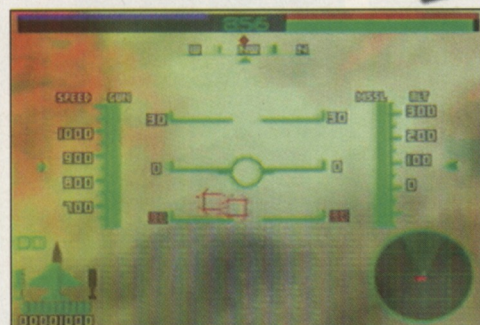
When you fly into combat, you *do* get the three aircraft you haven't

\$64,000 Question

- ➕ IMPRESSIVELY DETAILED AIRCRAFT
- ➕ SMOOTH TWO-PLAYER DEATHMATCH MODE
- ➖ IT'S SO SLOW AND JERKY!
- ➖ THE GAMEPLAY BECOMES REPETITIVE

Memory Options

MEMORY:
STORES
PROGRESS AND
BONUS AIRCRAFT
GAINED
CONTROLLER PAK:
NONE



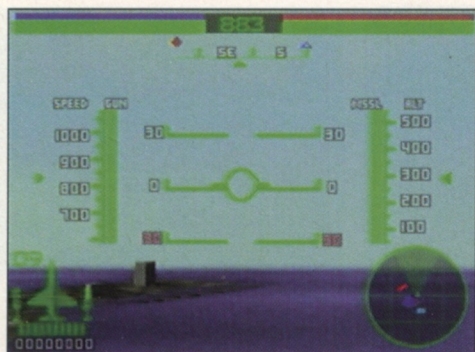
EXPLOSIONS ARE BIG, COLOURFUL, AND OFTEN TOTALLY AND UTTERLY OBSCURE EVERYTHING FROM VIEW, ALLOWING YOU TO CRASH INTO THE NEAREST BUILDING.



BEFORE EACH MISSION, YOU'LL GET BRIEFED BY AN ATTRACTIVE BLONDE AT CONTROL... NOT THAT I'D EVER FANCY A COMPUTER GAME IMAGE, YOU UNDERSTAND!



THIS STRANGE SPIDER-LIKE WALKING BOSS IS AN EASY TARGET. COME IN LOW TO AVOID THE TOP-MOUNTED GUNS AND IT'LL BE A WALKOVER.



THIS, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, IS THE COCKPIT VIEW. IT'S IDENTICAL TO THE EXTERIOR VIEW APART FROM THE FACT THAT YOU CAN'T SEE YOUR AIRCRAFT.



THE SNEAKY ENEMY HAS NON-OFFENSIVE AIRCRAFT IN THE FIELD. THEY FLY SLOW, STAY OUT OF THE WAY, AND MAKE VERY EASY TARGETS.



A LOT OF EFFORT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PUT INTO GETTING THE SUN AND ITS GLARE PERFECT. THE EFFECT CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS 'ANNOYING'.

ERS ASSAULT

chosen as your wingmen.

Unfortunately, they don't do much more than harass the enemy fighter aircraft and constantly get into

DUH!

Which brings us to one of the major game flaws. In most shoot-'em-ups, such as *Lylat Wars* for example, you

arcade coin-op *Afterburner*

trouble. When it comes to taking out the major targets, you're on your own.

The mission structure itself is fairly simple. You need to destroy a massive boss vehicle within a set time limit, and you need to go through a mass of support aircraft and ground vehicles to get to it. Or at least, you do in theory...

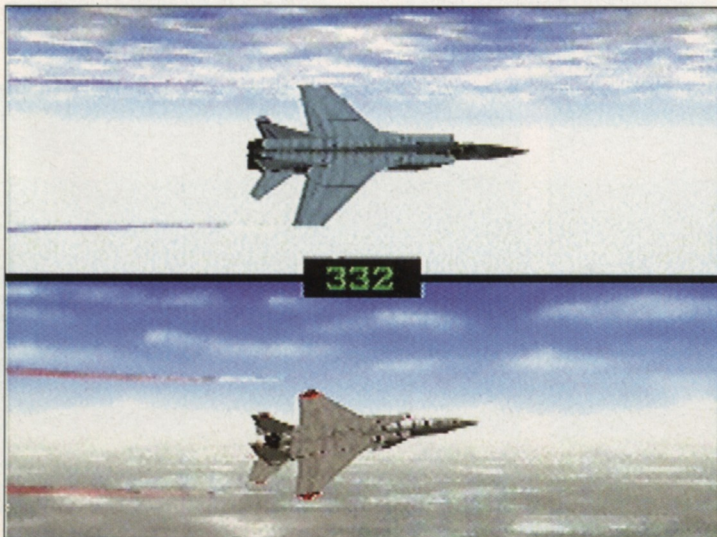
must pass through a level full of minor enemies before you can engage the end-of-level boss. Although this makes for a game with somewhat linear play, it nevertheless gives you some kind of structure. *With Aero Fighters Assault* however, the structure is a little different.

Instead of encountering the enemies in sequence, you meet them all at once, in a fairly circular playing arena, and can take on the boss from the word go.

This would be great, if, for instance, you were forced to pick off the smaller enemies before you hit the bigger one. But you don't need to. The layout of the combat area, and the constraints of a short time-limit in which to complete each mission, mean that you don't even have to bother with attacking the smaller enemies; instead, you can just go in head first and take on the level boss immediately.

The game style is very reminiscent of the old arcade coin-op *Afterburner*, which caused a sensation with its hectic second-person jet fighter action. Sadly, although *Aero Fighters Assault* may have recreated the looks of the old game, it hasn't managed to capture the thrilling gameplay of the now-dated shoot-'em-up. The major reason for this is the speed, or rather the lack of it.

This game is just so slow! The jet fighters don't so much fly into combat as trudge. You'll soon find yourself under the impression that the planes would probably be able to move faster if the pilots climbed out of their



IN DEATHMATCH MODE, THE TWO OPPOSING PLAYERS HAVE DIFFERENT CONTRAILS IN DIFFERING COLOURS, IN CASE YOU FORGET WHICH PLANE YOU'RE FLYING.



AFTER SEARCHING FOR ABOUT HALF AN HOUR, PLAYER TWO FINALLY GETS THE DROP ON PLAYER ONE. TOM CRUISE EAT YOUR HEART OUT!

The 'Posse'

THE PLANES YOU FLY IN *AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT* COME COMPLETE WITH A THEIR VERY OWN PILOT. WOULD YOU LIKE TO MEET THEM, BOYS AND GIRLS? YOU WOULD? VERY WELL, IF YOU'RE ALL SITTING COMFORTABLY, THEN IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER, HERE THEY ARE:

AIRCRAFT: A-10A THUNDERBOLT II
PILOT: GLENDIA
NATIONALITY: AMERICAN
HOBBIES: FLYING LARGE UNGAINLY AIRCRAFT, PROTECTING THE FREE WORLD AND WATCHING *OPRAH*.



AIRCRAFT: SU-35 SUPER FLANKER
PILOT: VOLK
NATIONALITY: RUSSIAN
HOBBIES: DRINKING VODKA, PUNCHING PEOPLE WHO ASK HIM WHERE HIS 'WAGON' IS



AIRCRAFT: FS-X
PILOT: HIEN
NATIONALITY: JAPANESE
HOBBIES: MARTIAL ARTS, KARAOKE AND TRYING TO DECIDE ON A HARD-SOUNDING NICKNAME FOR HIS AIRCRAFT



AIRCRAFT: F-14B TOMCAT
PILOT: HAWK
NATIONALITY: AMERICAN
HOBBIES: DRINKING BEER, FLYING BADLY AND DOING BILL AND TED IMPERSONATIONS

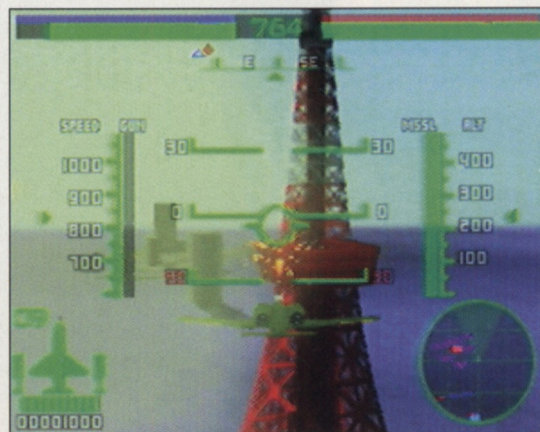


AT TIMES IT BECOMES DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON, AS THE GLARE OF THE SUN CAN BE BLINDING, AND YOUR PLANE BELCHES OIL. CATCH FIRE, AND YOUR VISIBILITY BECOMES ZERO. FORTUNATELY YOU EXPLODE SHORTLY AFTERWARDS.

cockpits and pushed. And this is even before any other aircraft appear on the screen! Get a lot of enemy activity on the screen at once – which, as all the enemy aircraft are on the field from the beginning, is pretty much all of the time – and the speed drops from 'trudge' to 'if-we-went-any-slower-we'd-be-going-backwards'.



CRASHING INTO THE GROUND DOESN'T ACTUALLY DAMAGE YOUR AIRCRAFT, SO IT'S A GREAT WAY TO ESCAPE ENEMY MISSILES!



IF YOU FIND THE FIRST LEVEL A BIT BORING, THEN YOU CAN SPEND YOUR TIME BLOWING HELL OUT OF TOKYO'S WELL-KNOWN LANDMARKS. LIKE TOKYO TOWER FOR EXAMPLE. ANDY'S BEEN THERE, SEEN THAT.

And speed is the key. It doesn't matter how impressive or realistic the gaming engine is if the whole thing runs about the same rate as a hibernating hedgehog!

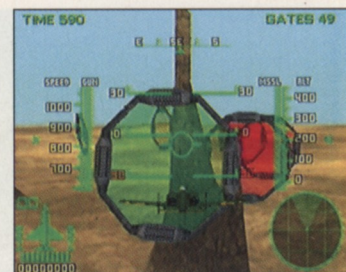
Faster than a speeding m

MULTIPLAYER MADNESS!

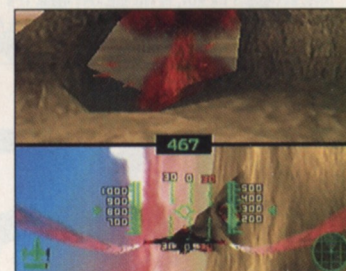
Unusually, for this sort of game, the multiplayer head-to-head deathmatch mode is actually faster and smoother than the main one-player game, and this is one of *Aero Fighters Assault*'s few saving graces. The reason for this is that there's nothing else in deathmatch mode except for the opposing aircraft, and as the game only supports two players, there's never more than two aircraft to handle. In the air-only scenario,

there's not even any *ground* to worry about, but the downside of this is that it gets difficult to work out which way is up and you'll probably spend the majority of your time just looking for the other player.

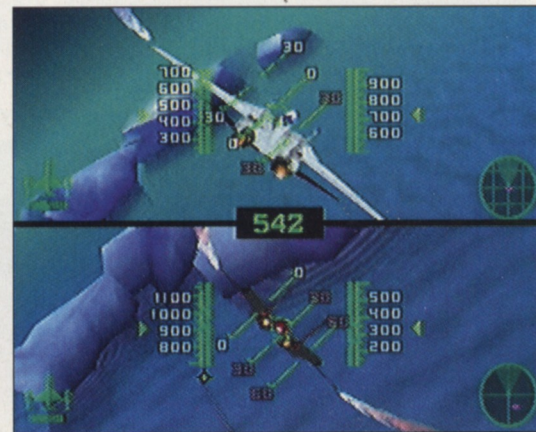
This game had so much potential, but it just doesn't cut it. The control system, for instance, has been well thought out. The controls themselves are completely definable, and there are two different systems, one 'normal' and one 'novice'. In novice mode the aircraft handling is



IN PRACTICE MODE, YOU HAVE TO FLY THROUGH A COURSE OF STRANGE FLOATING HOOPS. WEIRD!



PLAYER ONE COMES TO A STICKY END AFTER TRYING TO SHOW OFF BY FLYING UNDER A ROCK ARCHWAY. SERVES HIM RIGHT TOO.



AN ICY SEA IS ONE OF THE DEATHMATCH BACKDROPS. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE CAVES IN SEVERAL OF THE ICE FLOES, THEY ARE ALL JUST OUTSIDE OF THE PLAYING AREA, SO NO DEATH-DEFYING TUNNEL FLYING I'M AFRAID.

Aero Fighters Assault



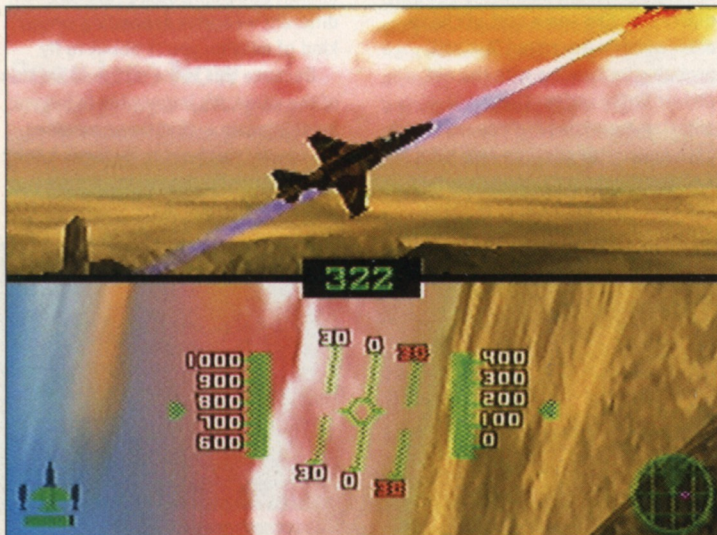
FIRE! FIRE! HELP! WHERE'S THE EJECT BUTTON? OH GOD, THERE ISN'T ONE!

simplified, making it easier to control but not as manoeuvrable as with the normal system. Barrel rolls and loop the loops for instance, are not permitted, but this stops the inexperienced novice immediately going into an uncontrolled spin and crashing. Once you're used to the plane handling, the normal option then allows all the spectacular aerial moves you could wish for, along with the associated dangers.

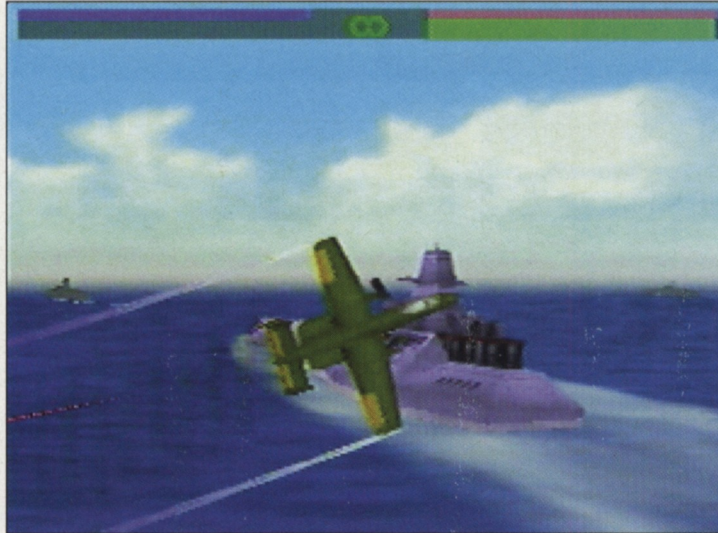
It's just a shame that everything moves so slowly. It's not as if there's even that much scenery to handle. Fly

through Tokyo, for example, and you'll find some buildings, but the majority of the city has been

covered with water as a result of a terrorist 'thermo-bomb' being detonated and raising world sea levels. Whilst this is obviously an interesting plot-line, it rather conveniently negates the need for a lot of detailed ground images. Not that I'm implying this was the intention mind you. I mean, there are some levels with ground, such as the desert with, er, rocks and things...



LOOK AT THAT SUNSET! ISN'T IT GREAT? DOESN'T IT JUST MAKE YOU WANT TO LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND TAKE UP PAINTING? (CAN YOU PAINT WITH NO ARMS?)



CERTAIN EXTERIOR VIEWS WILL SHOW YOU THE PLANE WITHOUT THE HUD (THANK GOODNESS). THE GAME LOOKS GREAT FROM THIS ANGLE - IT'S JUST IMPOSSIBLE TO HIT ANYTHING!

STILL, IT LOOKS NICE

On a more positive note, the graphics are very good. Buildings - what few of them there are - when hit with a missile don't just explode, but instead slowly collapse in upon themselves in a fiery heap. Frigates take a pounding, then when they've had enough keel over and slowly sink beneath the waves. Enemy aircraft sometimes explode outright, and at other times barrel slowly towards the earth in a ball of flames before exploding. Rockets and shells blow spray from the water. Rock arches can be flown through. There are so many excellent details in this game that it *should* be good.

On the other hand, the cockpit view doesn't actually include a cockpit, and the Heads-Up Display appears on the

exterior view of the aircraft as well as the interior, blocking a lot of the action from view. It must be said that you do need it though, because without the altimeter and with the lack of surface detail, once you get below a certain height it's practically impossible to work how far you are from the ground.

Aero Fighters Assault is going to have to go down as a nice idea, badly implemented. Who knows, perhaps by the time the PAL version emerges, the whole speed/slow down problem will have been eradicated. Well, it might happen!

Until then, if you fancy a reasonably good two-player head-on deathmatch, then you might want to look here, although the deathmatch mode alone doesn't really justify the price. Otherwise, unless you don't mind flying through the air faster than a speeding milkfloat (with no wheels) then it's probably best to steer well clear. I'm off now to do something a little more thrilling, like... oh I don't know, stamp collecting maybe.

AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT WAS SUPPLIED BY THE VIDEO GAMES CENTRE. GET IN TOUCH WITH THEM ON (01202) 527314.

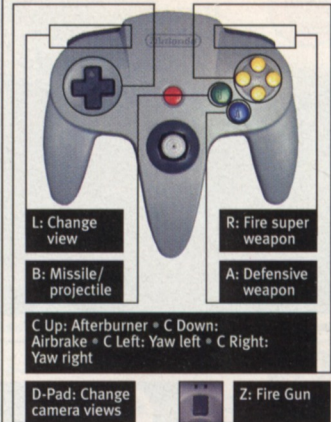
R⁶⁴

2nd opinion

I WASN'T SURE WHAT I WAS LOOKING AT HERE AT FIRST. SOMETHING ON THE MEGA DRIVE? CAN'T BE, THERE ARE TOO MANY COLOURS. *AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT* HAS GOT TO BE THE SLOWEST THING ON THE PLANET - IT'S LIKE BEING CHASED BY CONTINENTAL DRIFT! YOU CAN MAKE A CUPPA IN BETWEEN SCREEN UPDATES. MAJOR LET-DOWN, MAJOR BOREDOM. **LOZ COOPER**

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

Wild Choppers: Seta (import)
Reviewed: Issue 9, 72%
Lylat Wars: Nintendo (£59.99)
Reviewed: Issue 2, 94%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

61%

Soundbite:

AFTERBURNER-STYLE SHOOT-'EM-UP ACTION, SADLY MARRIED BY SPEED PROBLEMS.

71





DAN-AIR FLIGHT 069 WAS GETTING INTO BIG TROUBLE.



THIS MASSIVE HOVERCRAFT IS THE BOSS OF THE CAVERN LEVEL.

Ninfo

Players



Publisher:
Developer:

Seta
Seta

Game Type:
Origin:

Shoot-'em-up
Japan

Release Date: Out now (import)
Price: £69.99

Memory Options



MEMORY:
FOUR IN-GAME
SAVES
CONTROLLER PAK:
N/A

\$64,000 Question

- ✓ CLEVER, IF INITIALLY CONFUSING, CONTROL METHOD
- ✓ SOME QUITE SMART GAMEPLAY TOUCHES
- SLOWER THAN A DEAD DOG
- HORRIBLE MUSIC
- SOUND COULD BE BETTER

Crap **JOKES** about 'choppers'? You won't find 'em **HERE!**



GOD, WITH A NAME LIKE THAT it's just asking for it, isn't it? An endless stream of double entendres will come vomiting from the keyboards of games reviewers across the nation, cackling away like Kenneth Williams never died. Well not here. I'm going to come right out with it and

WILD

What kind

objectives were simple – find things and blow them up. *Wild Choppers* is sort of a proper 3-D version of this, with extra tweaks like a wide choice of aircraft and being able to choose different weapons depending what kind of mission you're about to fly.

Because this is the Japanese version of the game, it's impossible to tell you anything about what these missions are or why you have to fly them. I don't even know who the enemy are meant to be! Luckily, you don't need a copy of

point out that in British slang 'chopper' is slang for 'nob', hence this game could be called *Wild Nobs*. That way, I can get all the cheap laughs out of the way at once instead of spreading innuendo over four pages like a skid mark over y-fronts.

Game veterans, by which I mean anyone who remembers joypads that didn't look like some sort of cheap alien weapon from *Star Trek*, will probably be familiar with the old *Desert Strike* series. These entertaining oldies put you, as a rock-hard helicopter pilot, up against a Saddam Hussein lookalike over an isometric 3-D landscape. Mission



THE KOLINSKY PILOT TAKES OUT HER PENT-UP RAGE AGAINST SOCIETY'S ILLS BY BLOWING UP A TANK AND LISTENING TO THE CREW SCREAM IN FLAMING AGONY AS THEY COOK.



THIS BLOKE GIVES THE MISSION BRIEFINGS, AND ALSO HAS ARMS THAT APPEAR TO BE MADE FROM SPAM.



MISSILES, BOMBS, MORE MISSILES, MORE BOMBS. USEFUL FOR BLOWING THINGS UP.



ONE OF THOSE KLINGON SHIPS FROM *STAR TREK* DIVES IN FOR THE KILL. LUCKILY THEY'RE COMPLETELY CRAP AND AS HARD TO KILL AS A COMA VICTIM WITH A STEEL SPIKE TOUCHING THEIR HEART.

Chopper Power

YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HELICOPTER IN THE AIR LONGER BY GRABBING POWER-UPS, WHICH REALISTICALLY BOUNCE UP AND DOWN FROM WRECKED BUILDINGS. OPEN THE BOX!

WEAPONS

INCREASE YOUR COPTER'S CANNON CAPACITY UP TO FIVE TIMES.



FUEL

KEEPS YOUR MOTOR RUNNIN' - USEFUL WHEN YOU'RE IN MID-AIR.

SHIELD

RECHARGES YOUR HELICOPTER'S MAGICAL DAMAGE-AVOIDANCE FIELD.



MONEY

GREENBACKS, MOOLAH, THE OLD FOLDING STUFF - ESSENTIAL FOR MERC MAYHEM.

BOOBY TRAP

COULD BE RHYMING SLANG! DON'T COLLECT IT - IT EXPLODES!



CHOPPERS

of useless piddly-ass helicopter can't go up a bit?

the United Nations charter to work out that everybody apart from the little hostage blokes who come spilling out of trucks and bunkers when you nuke them are bad guys, and can be TWEPped with impunity.

PORK LIPS NOW

By ignoring the guy waffling away in Japanese at the mission briefings and going straight to the map screen, you can usually get a fairly good idea of

what you're meant to be shooting at. Each mission takes place in a square region of land, the terrain varying from fairly boring deserts and grasslands to towering volcanoes and twisting canyons. On most levels your helicopter automatically changes altitude with the terrain, keeping itself a short way above the ground, but stages like the canyon trap you between the rocky walls, so good control is essential if you want to stop

your rotor blades from making like a Flymo against solid rock. This is a bit crap - it might make for a more challenging game, but what kind of useless piddly-ass helicopter can't go up a bit and fly over the top?

When you start playing, the first thing you notice is that you can't control your copter. *Wild Choppers* is the first N64 game I can remember where the control system hasn't been designed to be idiot proof - it's bloody

hard work! The analogue stick rotates your helicopter and tilts the nose up and down (the game options let you choose whether or not you want 'aircraft' controls, where pushing the stick up moves the nose down), and the d-pad slides it left and right and controls its speed. The first few flights you take, you'll end up spinning about like a chimp that's just spent an hour in a tumble dryer. Even after some practice it's very easy to lose track of



A CASH POWER-UP MAKES LIKE A SPACEHOPPER AND BOUNCES FROM A BUILDING, READY FOR COLLECTION.



"OH-WOAH-WOAH-HOAH, CAMOUFLAGE - THINGS ARE NEVER QUITE THE WAY THEY SEEM..." [SHUT UP - Ed]



THE HUNCHBACKED HELICOPTER OF DROOLING IMBECILE HIROMITSU BLUNDERS ABOUT LIKE AN OAF.



FIRE CAT

WEAPONS: 4

THIS TWIN-ROTOR JOB IS QUITE HANDY IN A SCRAP – IT'S MANOEUVRABLE, FAIRLY NIPPY AND ITS PILOT EMMA ISN'T BAD EITHER. A GOOD CHOICE FOR BEGINNERS, AND SO'S THE HELICOPTER!



GA-GA

WEAPONS: 5

NAMED AFTER A LOUSY QUEEN SONG, THIS WEIRD LITTLE BUG IS PRONE TO ENGINE FAILURE AT INCONVENIENT TIMES. THE PILOT MUST BE ONE OF THE BOSTON HIROMITSUS.



HARD BULL

WEAPONS: 2

JUST YOUR EVERYDAY WW2 FIGHTER PLANE WITH ROTORS STUCK ON IT, HARD BULL APPARENTLY BELONGS TO THE YVAN. IT CAN GET QUITE A SHIFT ON, BUT ONLY HAS LIMITED WEAPON CAPACITY.



KOLINSKY

WEAPONS: 4

TOUGH AS OLD NAILS, JUST LIKE ITS HARD-FACED PILOT, THIS RUSSIAN-STYLED PIECE OF KIT ISN'T MUCH TO LOOK AT – AGAIN, JUST LIKE ITS HARD-FACED PILOT! IT GETS THE JOB DONE, THOUGH – JUST LIKE ETC ETC!



RETSU

WEAPONS: 2

AFTER WATCHING TOO MANY RAMBO MOVIES, JUN BOUGHT A WAR SURPLUS FIGHTER AND STUCK A BIG FAN ON THE ROOF TO KEEP HIM COOL. THAT'S WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE ANYWAY!



SKY TURBO

WEAPONS: 3

THE BEST ALL-ROUNDER FOR BEGINNERS, THE SKY TURBO IS PILOTED BY THE GRINNING ALL-AMERICAN MIKE. HE'S PROBABLY A SECRET TRANSVESTITE WITH A MAJOR DRUG PROBLEM AND A THING FOR HORSES.



WASP

WEAPONS: 3

BUY BRITISH, BUY BEST! DON'T KNOW WHAT THE RAF'D SAY ABOUT ANDY'S CRAP BEARD AND STUPID BANDANNA THOUGH. EVEN THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE A BELL END, THE WASP IS ANOTHER GOOD ALL-ROUNDER.



WHALE-32

WEAPONS: 5

THAT WOULDN'T BE DANNY AS IN DANNY GLOVER, STAR OF BAT 21, WOULD IT? THE WHALE LIVES UP TO ITS NAME – IT'S A TWIN-ROTOR BLOATER WHICH CARRIES A LOT OF FIREPOWER BUT IS OTHERWISE A BIT OF A SLUG.

Blade Runners

SO WHAT DO THE STARS SIGNIFY? I DON'T KNOW, AND YOU DON'T EITHER, UNLESS YOU'RE JAPANESE. THEY MIGHT MEAN 'BOOT SIZE' AND 'NUMBER OF CUP-HOLDERS' FOR ALL I KNOW. WHATEVER THEY MEAN, YOU CAN TAKE IT AS READ THAT THE MORE STARS THERE ARE, THE BETTER THE CHOPPER IS.



what you're doing in the heat of battle, but things do get better.

Having two pads to control the helicopter gives players the chance to circle and strafe targets in a way that wouldn't be possible with just the analogue stick, because you have to get your gunship's nose pointing down at just the right angle to hit things. Even though it takes a while to get used to, it's a very flexible method that works out just right for the kind of game it is. Simplifying the controls, or giving players some kind of auto-aiming system, would have removed a lot of the challenge.

I LOVE THE SMELL...

Before a mission, you get to kit out your chopper with a variety of weapons. As well as the standard gun, your weapons pylons (some helicopters can carry more than others) can be loaded for bear with air-to-air homing missiles, target-busting rockets, cluster bombs and a secret weapon that I haven't managed to release yet. I don't spend every waking hour playing videogames, you know! There's drink and girls and stuff to fit in too. Anyway, these weapons are essential to your missions; while the main gun can be used to total

THIS REFINERY IS PRODUCING SOMETHING EVIL, LIKE NERVE GAS OR BOYZONE RECORDS. BLAST IT!

anything you see, it can be a time-consuming business, especially if you're trying to dodge enemy fire at the same time. Just locking on and unleashing a homing missile is a lot more straightforward!

The basic cannon can be upgraded

Wild Choppers new

during a mission by collecting power-ups. These are found by destroying buildings, and the little crates that are revealed then hurl themselves skywards to be collected. Gun power-



A FLOATING BEER BARREL PILOTED BY A LITTLE MANIAC IN A CANYON WITH A HELICOPTER SHOOTING AT IT.



SEEK AND DESTROY! THE HUGE FLYING WING HAS TO BE SHOT DOWN, SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



JUST WHAT EVERY GROWING BOY NEEDS, A HANDY-DANDY SHIELD RECHARGE PACK.

Wild Choppers



GET TOO CLOSE, AND THESE LITTLE RAMBOS WILL JUMP UP AND ATTACK YOUR CHOPPER WITH THEIR HANDS. HMM.

ups are cumulative, so you can wind up with four barrels spewing leaden death at the enemy, and other useful items that bounce out of the ruins include shield recharges, extra fuel and money. That's right – you're obviously supposed to either be some sort of mercenary group or a privatised air force, and you have to pay for every missile you fire out of your own pocket! Completing a mission earns your pay for the week, and bonus bucks can be bagged by rescuing hostages and things like that. All in a day's work.

Mind you, it'd probably take a day to fly from one side of the battlefield to the other in the choppers on offer here. The thing that really stands out about *Wild Choppers* is how slow it is! This isn't because the game itself is struggling to maintain a reasonable pace, since there's no more going on at once than in any other N64 title. It's not especially jerky either, so it's not an attempt to keep the frame rate up. It looks like a deliberate decision by



HOMING MISSILES ARE THE BUSINESS. YOU CAN RUN, BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE, SUCKER!

to stay in the air, they move so slowly. It's like playing underwater! Maybe they should have changed the scenario and called it *Wild Subs* instead, although that would bring up unwanted sandwich connotations.

...OF NAPALM IN THE MORNING

Despite this, *Wild Choppers* isn't at all bad to play. The missions have enough surprises to keep you interested, like having to defend a 737 as it weaves through narrow valleys on the third mission, or the mad little Rambo blokes who'll jump onto your copter given half a chance and hang onto the tail until you scrape them off against something. Even though they're fairly simply drawn, the enemy hardware is quite cool-looking as well,

The Good, The Bad And The Ugly! I couldn't find an option to turn the music off, so I had to put up with it.

Wild Choppers overall is all right but not brilliant. It reminds me a lot of a PlayStation game I can't remember the name of [*Black Dawn* – Ed], which was also all right but not brilliant. Although things get quite manic when you start ducking from side to side, trying to avoid streams of enemy fire as you struggle to get a few shots in yourself, it doesn't have the grip-yer-gonads factor that games like this really need. It's probably because of the snails on Mogadon speed – air combat should be fast paced, but *Wild Choppers* never seems to get much

seems to get much above walking pace

the programmers – the question is, why? Rather than whizzing around like the high-tech death machines they are, the helicopters just sort of amble about like people out for a stroll. The missiles are even worse; it makes you wonder how they manage



THERE'S NO SLOWDOWN WHEN THERE ARE LOTS OF AIRCRAFT – BUT THEN THE GAME'S SLOW ALREADY!

starting off with normal helicopters and trucks and moving onto big green hovercraft, giant stealth bombers and a grinning tank like the one that toasted James Bond's mate in *Dr No*.

In general, the game's graphics are probably best described as 'okay-ish' – there's quite a bit of fogging on some levels, and things like the sides of mountains look more like they're made from carpet offcuts than rock. To make up for this there are some reasonably screen-shaking explosions, accompanied by fairly muffled sound effects and Rumble Pak jiggerings if you've got it plugged in. I'm not sure about the music – the first level is all wailing guitars which get annoying very quickly, but one of the later levels goes all spaghetti western, as if it's trying to imitate the theme music to

above walking pace. It's a pity, because after the complete pile of old bollocks better known as *Aero Fighters Assault*, the N64 really could do with a decent air combat game.

WILD CHOPPERS WAS SUPPLIED BY THE VIDEO GAME CENTRE, ON (01202) 527314.

R64

2nd opinion

I THOUGHT *WILD CHOPPERS* HAD QUITE A LOT OF POTENTIAL, BUT IT WAS LET DOWN BY BEING SO INCREDIBLY LAID BACK IT MAKES CLINT EASTWOOD LOOK AS JITTERY AS WOODY ALLEN. THE CONTROL SYSTEM IS A NICE IDEA, BUT IN PRACTICE IT'S A BIT TOO FIDDLY AND DISTRACTING TO BECOME REALLY COMFORTABLE WITH. ANDY McDERMOTT

64 THE BOTTOM LINE

Controls



Alternatives

Pilotwings: Nintendo (£59.99)
Reviewed: Issue 1, 79%
Aero Fighters Assault: Video System (import)
Reviewed: Issue 9, 61%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

72%

Soundbite:
COULD HAVE BEEN A WINNER IF IT WASN'T SO SLOOOOOOOOW!

75



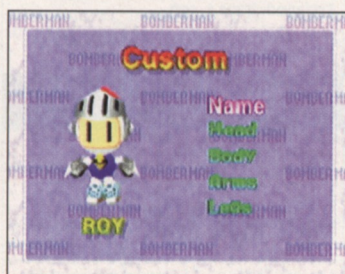
Ninfo

Publisher: Hudson Soft **Game Type:** 3-D platform puzzle **Release Date:** Out Now
Developer: Hudson Soft **Origin:** Issue 7 (Japan) **Price:** £49.99

We reviewed the **JAPANESE** version of this game in issue 7. Now that's it's been translated into **ENGLISH**, does it make any more **SENSE**?

PAL Performance

- HOW DOES THE UK VERSION COMPARE IN TERMS OF SPEED TO THE IMPORT CART?
- BORDERS:** NONE
- SPEED:** PRETTY MUCH THE SAME AS NTSC



A NEAT LITTLE FEATURE OF THE GAME IS THE EXTRA BODY PARTS YOU CAN FIND IN ADVENTURE MODE, WHICH CAN THEN BE USED TO CUSTOMISE YOUR BOMBERMAN. DON'T THOSE TRAINERS JUST GO WITH THAT HELMET?



HAVING WATCHED ANDY struggle and swear at the Japanese incarnation of

Bomberman 64, I wasn't sure whether I was looking forward to this game or not. Everything that was in the import version is still there, from the cunning puzzles to the frustrating sudden death just as you are about to finish a level.

One thing that has translated very well is the text that makes up the storyline. I mention this because if you have ever played a game converted from Japanese, you may have noticed that the English

BOMB



translation doesn't always make a lot of sense. This is for two reasons; the first being that a direct translation of the Japanese text often wouldn't fit into the message boxes on screen, and the second reason being that the Japanese are basically pretty weird.

Bomberman, though, makes perfect sense! (Well, in a weird, pom-pom decorated high-explosive throwing kind of way, at least.) The storyline

know from the start what are supposed to be doing, plus the manual explains all the controls (which is always a bonus in any game and is something that gave Andy a tad of trouble with the import).

SOMETHING LOOKS FAMILIAR...

Graphically and audibly, the PAL conversion of *Bomberman* is practically identical to its Japanese counterpart, and the

Manic mental action abounds!

Memory Options



MEMORY:
THREE GAME SAVES
CONTROLLER PAK:
EXTRA SAVED POSITIONS, PLUS CUSTOM BOMBERMEN!

flows well, and the text is presented in clearly understandable sentences that all appear to have some relevance to the game and haven't just been put in to fill up the space left by, say, an over-long formal Japanese greeting. This means you

notorious borders that often appear on UK N64 games don't appear to have materialised this time. The gameplay is also practically unchanged, with the added advantage that you can actually understand the hints and tips offered by characters



MAKE SURE YOU'VE DONE EVERYTHING BEFORE YOU ACTIVATE SWITCHES, AS IN CERTAIN CASES, LIKE THIS ONE, ACCESSING CERTAIN AREAS SEALS OFF OTHERS...



END OF LEVEL BOSSES ARE EFFING HUGE! THIS... ERM, 'WATER THING' IS CALLED LEVIATHAN, AND ONE HIT FROM HIM WILL SQUASH YOU FLAT!

BOMBERMAN 64



RED MOUNTAIN IS A MAKE OF COFFEE... ER, AND ALSO A FIERY VOLCANIC WORLD IN WHICH LAVA BOMBS DROP FROM THE SKY - WATCH FOR THEIR SHADOWS!



THESE BIG GUNS ARE A COMPLETE NIGHTMARE, DROPPING SHELLS ON YOU IF YOU STAY IN ONE PLACE MORE THAN ABOUT THREE SECONDS.



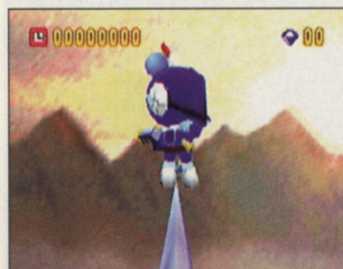
THE EXITS ARE MARKED WITH REALLY SUBTLE CLUES AS TO WHICH WAY YOU SHOULD GO.



BLOW UP SCENERY LIKE ROCKS, BLOCKS OR TREES, AND A MASS OF BONUS STUFF WILL BE REVEALED.

in-game. Of course, when I say 'unchanged', I'm assuming you read the import review in issue seven. For those of you who didn't (and if not, shame on you!) *Bomberman 64* is a two-part game, consisting of an adventure game and a battle mode. The adventure mode is a 3-D arcade puzzle adventure, in the style of *Mario 64* and *Ganbare Goemon*. The objective (or 'plot', if you prefer) is to free your planet from the tyranny of evil alien invaders (are there ever any other kind?) who have... er, invaded. To do this, you need to run, puzzle and bomb your way through four sub-worlds - each spread over four stages and guarded by huge end-of-level bosses - before tackling the aliens head-on on their motherworld.

The second mode, battle mode, comes in two parts; single battle and team battle. Single battle is fairly straightforward - the four players simply run about blowing seven bells out of each other with their bombs until only one remains standing. The



THIS IS ONE OF THE STAGE TWO BOSSES. THEY POP UP, THROW THINGS AT YOU, AND DIE FAIRLY EASILY. NOT AT ALL LIKE THE END-OF-LEVEL BOSSES...

team battle is a bit more complex (but not a lot), with two teams made up from any combination of the four players (two on two, three on one, etc) attempting to destroy five of the opposing team's coloured crystals whilst preventing the same happening to their own crystals (make sense?) Now, I have a confession to make here. I know Andy didn't think much of the multiplayer game compared with previous *Bomberman* incarnations, but I have to admit that I've never played any other *Bomberman* games (gasp... no!). I'm not quite sure how this happened, I just seem to have completely missed all of them. That said though, I have to disagree completely with Andy and say that - for the PAL version of *Bomberman 64* at least - the multiplayer mode is ace! Manic mental action abounds as all players throw bombs every which way. The team mode is by far the most enjoyable, probably because your Bombermen come back to life when killed rather than staying dead, and although it does suffer a little from slowdown when there's altogether too much happening on screen, this doesn't hamper the fun at all.

IT'S EXPLOSIVE!

All in all, *Bomberman 64* is an excellent addition to a growing number of top N64 titles. The adventure mode does take a while to get into, but once you do, you'll be bombing away like there's no tomorrow! (Which there probably wouldn't be if you went running

around lobbing high-explosives.)

Yes, it is similar to *Mario 64*, but there's more than enough about it that's different to keep even those who've played *Mario* to death interested and entertained. If I had to be negative, I'd have to say that you'll need to find some friends for the multiplayer mode, since once you've gotten used to it, the AI players are just too easy, even on their highest setting. Not that that makes it any less enjoyable though, as they are good enough that although you'll win every time, you'll have fun doing it.

U64

2nd opinion

GREAT, I HAVE TO WRITE THE SECOND OPINION BOX FOR BOMBERMAN TWO MONTHS RUNNING! MY OPINION HASN'T CHANGED MUCH - IT'S OBVIOUSLY A LOT EASIER TO WORK OUT WHAT TO DO WITH ENGLISH TEXT, BUT APART FROM THAT IT'S STILL SLIGHTLY TOO ANNOYING AT TIMES TO BE A REALLY GREAT TITLE. GOOD FUN IN MULTI-PLAYER, THOUGH. LOZ COOPER



Controls



Alternatives

Super Mario 64: Nintendo (£49.99)
Reviewed: Issue 1, 95%
Ganbare Goemon: Konami (import)
Reviewed: Issue 5, 70%

Rating

Graphics



Audio



Gameplay



Lasting Challenge



Overall

86%

Soundbite:

BOMBERMAN 64 HAS ARRIVED ON THE N64, AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S HERE TO STAY!

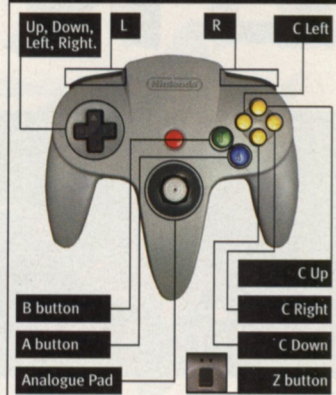
More **GAMES** come out, more **CHEATS** appear – it's one of those self-perpetuating recursive **JOBBIES** that make your head **SPIN**, but when you've got **LOADS** of cheats like these available, who **CARES**?

86 TOP GEAR RALLY

After the massive solutions of the past couple of issues, we're giving our game-busting braincells a bit of a rest. But not so much that we can't dish out maps and hints for all you prospective Colin McRaes out there!



Pad at a glance



Duke Nukem 64 (US VERSION)

THE BAD NEWS IS THAT WE COULDN'T GET THESE CHEATS TO WORK ON THE UK VERSION OF THE GAME – THOSE PROGRAMMING TYPES UP AT EUROCOM MUST HAVE CHANGED THINGS! STILL, IF YOU'VE GOT THE AMERICAN VERSION OF THIS 90%-RATED BLASTER, YOU CAN STILL TRY THEM OUT FOR SIZE!

ENABLE CHEAT MENU

This is the first thing you have to do – none of the other cheats here will work until the cheat mode is active. On the main menu screen, enter Left, Left, L, L, Right, Right, Left, Left.

INVINCIBILITY

When the cheat menu is active, press R seven times to make Duke even more nails than usual!

NO ENEMIES

When the cheat menu is active, enter L, C Left, Left, R, C Right, Right, Left, Left, Right to play the game with no monsters! Where's the fun in that?

ALL ITEMS

When the cheat menu is active, enter R, C Right, Right, L, C Left, Left, C Right, Right in order to be able to obtain all special items at will.



Aero Fighters Assault

OUCH – THIS EAGERLY AWAITED GAME HAS TURNED OUT TO BE A BIGGER DOG THAN DIGBY! STILL, IF YOU'VE BEEN UNWISE ENOUGH TO BUY IT, YOU MIGHT STILL BE ABLE TO GRAB SOME EXTRA LAUGHS FROM THESE CODES.

ACCESS F-15 AND MAO-MAO

Wait until the 'Press Start' message pops up on the screen, then push C Left, C Down, C Right, C Up, C Left, C Right and C Down. You'll now be able to do your bit for equal rights in the air force!

PLAY AS SPANKY

This is fairly straightforward, you just need to complete all the bonus missions and Spanky will be yours to command!

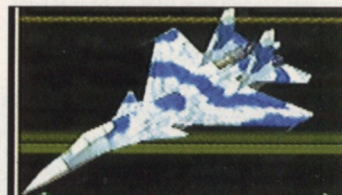
PLAY AS BAD GUYS IN DEATHMATCH

Fancy playing as the bad guys? For each level you complete in the

normal game, you'll gain one enemy plane for use in deathmatch mode, up to a total of six.

CHANGE COLOURS

Pressing R on the select aircraft screen in all the modes but deathmatch will give your plane a facelift. In deathmatch mode, you'll need to hold down R and select one of the four default aircraft.



Diddy Kong Racing

ENTER THE CODES BELOW ON THE MAGIC CODES SCREEN FOR VARIOUS HELPFUL (AND NOT SO HELPFUL) EFFECTS. ONCE THE CODES HAVE BEEN ENTERED, THEY CAN BE TURNED ON OR OFF BY ACCESSING THE 'CODE LIST' SCREEN. SOME OF THEM WILL WORK IN ADVENTURE MODE, OTHERS WILL ONLY HAVE AN EFFECT IN TRACKS MODE.



MAGIC CODES

JOINTVENTURE – Co-operative two-player adventure mode
DOUBLEVISION – Everyone can select the same player
FREEFORALL – Maximum power-up on pickups
FREEFRUIT – Start race with ten bananas
VITAMINB – No limit to number of banana power-ups
ZAPTHEZIPPERS – Remove zippers from the track
NOYELLOWSTUFF – No bananas on track
BYEBYEBALLOONS – No balloons (ie, weapons) on track
TIMETOLOSE – Ultimate AI characters
BOGUSBANANAS – Bananas reduce speed instead of boosting it
BODYARMOR – All balloons are yellow shield balloons
ROCKETFUEL – All balloons are blue boost balloons
BOMBSAWAY – All balloons are red rocket balloons
OPPOSITESATTRACT – All balloons are magnetic rainbow balloons
TOXICOFFENDER – All balloons are green drop-behind balloons
ARNOLD – Larger characters

TEENYWEENIES – Smaller characters
OFFROAD – Four-wheel drive for more speed on rough terrain
BLABBERMOUTH – Instead of horn, characters burble incoherently
JUKEBOX – Music menu
WHODIDTHIS – View the credits without completing the game

PLAY AS DRUMSTICK

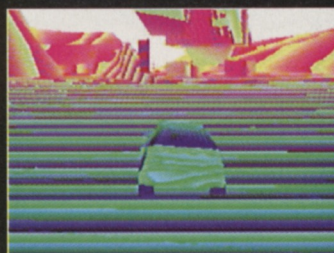
To access the cartoon characters' fastest racer, you'll first need to get all the amulet pieces from both amulets *and* the four gold trophies. Then return to the central area where all the frogs are and look for the little green fellow sporting some red feathers. Run him over to enable Drumstick.

PLAY AS TT

You'll need to beat the small clock-like fellow in every race on time-trial mode. You'll know whether you've done it because you'll see his ghost as you race, and if you do it he'll tell you to 'try the next race'. Beat all TT's times, and you'll be able to play as him! Oh, and it's not at all easy...



TOP GEAR RALLY



SOME MORE CHEATS FOR THIS GREAT RACER HAVE APPEARED. CHECK 'EM OUT!

PLAYSTATION MODE

In technical terms, this cheat removes bi-linear filtering. If you're not a techno-ponce, it takes off the blurring and makes everything look horrible and blocky! During a game, press B, Left, Right, Up, Left, Z, Right for a ticket to Blocksville.

ACID MODE

Wow, far out, man! This strange code lets you see what it's like to drive while out of your head on illegal substances. During play, push C Down, Z, B, Up, Up, Right for that full-on hippy vibe.



ALL TRACKS

The cheat to access all tracks we printed last issue *does* work – honest! To get it to work, you have to be on the title screen, since pressing A will put you onto the selection screen. Rest assured, you *can* play the Strip Mine track, and here are the pictures to prove it!

When the Kemco logo appears, quickly press A, Left, Left, Right, Down; Z – you'll then be able to play



the Strip Mine track (and any others you haven't already opened) in Arcade and Time Attack modes.

VIEW STRIP MINE

If you don't want to cheat your way to it, but still want a sneak preview, you can see a tour of the Strip Mine track during the credits by going to the credits icon in the options menu and pressing Left, C Down, Right, Down and Z.

WCW VS NWO: WORLD TOUR



NO SO MUCH CHEATS, MORE HELPFUL GUIDES, HERE'S HOW YOU ACCESS A NUMBER OF OTHERWISE INACCESSIBLE CHARACTERS.

PLAY AS DALLAS PAGE

Choose WCW in the League Challenge and play through till you reach Dallas Page. Once you've successfully defeated him he will be available on the select screen.

PLAY AS GLACIER

Also in League Challenge mode, if you beat IU you'll then be able to access that frosty wrestler Glacier.

PLAY AS RANDY SAVAGE

If the Macho Man is more your cup of tea, beat NWO and you'll be able to play as Randy Savage himself!

PLAY AS WRATH

The character of Wrath can be gained by playing as DOA and beating him in single-player mode. Then he'll be yours to wreak havoc with.

A new game mode entitled 'Whole World Wrestling' will be available once you've completed the other modes. Within this mode, you'll eventually meet two bosses, one for the Heavyweight category and one for the Cruiserweight category. Once you've beaten them, they'll be available as selectable characters. The characters are as follows:
WWW Super Cruiser – Black Widow
WWW Super Heavy – Joe Bruiser

Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero

SPLAT! RIP! BURST! THE MAN WITH PANTS SO COOL YOU COULD STORE RASPBERRY RIPPLE IN THEM HAS AN ADVENTURE TO COMPLETE – YOU CAN MAKE SUB-ZERO'S LIFE A LOT EASIER WITH THESE CODES.

PASSWORDS

Enter the following codes on the password screen for useful results:

- NXCVR** – Will give you unlimited urns
- GTTBHR** – Grants you 1000 lives
- ZCHRRY** – Start with 20,000 experience points at the Fortress
- GRVDTs** – This code lets you view the credits

LEVEL CODES

- Wind – **THWMSB**
- Earth – **CNSZDG**
- Water – **ZVRKDM**
- Fire – **JYPPHD**
- Prison – **RGTKCS**
- Bridge – **QFTLWN**
- Fortress – **XJKNZT**



DATTEL ACTION REPLAY CODES



BOMBERMAN 64

Infinite lives
802AC617 0063

Stop timer
802AC633 0000

Infinite credits
802AC61B 0063

Press button for 99 gems
882AC61F 0063

EXTREME G

Infinite turbos
801651CB 0003
801651CF 0003

255 race points
80169837 00FF

Roach bike
8016983F 0008

Neon bike
8016983F 0009

Antigrav and Fishy modes
80097687 000A

Antigrav mode
80097687 0008

Boulder mode
80097687 0001

Boulder and Fishy modes
80097687 0003

Boulder and Wireframe modes
80097687 0011

Extreme mode
80095F6E 0002

Fishy mode
80097687 0002

Ghost mode
80097687 0040

Magnify mode
80097687 0004

Stealth mode
80097687 0020

GOLDENEYE Dam:

Infinite health
810BA3DC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800B8B97 0007

Facility:
Infinite health
8109D7DC 3F80

Infinite Ammo
8009DF97 0007

Runway, Surface 1 and Depot:
Infinite health
810C07DC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800C0F97 0007

Bunker 1, Bunker 2 and Silo:
Infinite health
8109AFDC 3F80

Infinite ammo
8009B797 0007

Frigate:
Infinite health
810ADBDC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800AE397 0007

Surface 2:
Infinite health
810CCFDC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800CD797 0007

Statue Park:
Infinite health
810AC7DC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800ACF97 0007

Archives, Caverns and Cradle:
Infinite health
810CC3C3 3F80

Infinite ammo
800B4797 0007

Streets:
Infinite health
810BDFDC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800BE797 0007

Train, Jungle and Control:
Infinite health

810A77DC 3F80

Infinite ammo
800A7F97 0007

HEXEN
Infinite health
813F11C FFFF

Axe/Staff/Frost Shards
013F147 00FF

Hammer/Firestorm/Ar c of Death
8013F149 00FF

Quietus/Wraithverge/
Bloodscourge
8013F14B 00FF

Infinite blue mana
8013F14D 00CF

Infinite green mana
8013F14F 00CF

All items and artefacts
8013F119 0020

8013F091 0001

8013F093 00FF

8013F095 0002

8013F097 00FF

8013F099 0003

8013F09B 00FF

8013F09D 0004

8013F09F 00FF

8013F0A1 0005

8013F0A3 00FF

8013FoA5 0006

8013FoA7 00FF

8013FoA9 0007

8013FoAB 00FF

8013FoAD 0008

8013FoAF 00FF

8013FoB1 0009

8013FoB3 00FF

8013FoB5 000A

8013FoB7 00FF

8013FoB9 000B

8013FoBB 00FF

8013FoBD 000C

8013FoBF 00FF

8013FoC1 000D

8013FoC3 00FF

8013FoC5 000E

8013FoC7 00FF

8013FoC9 000F

8013FoCB 00FF

8013FoCD 0010

8013FoCF 00FF

8013FoD1 0011

8013FoD3 00FF

8013FoD5 0012

8013FoD7 00FF

8013FoD9 0013

8013FoDB 00FF

8013FoDD 0014

8013FoDF 00FF

8013FoE1 0015

8013FoE3 00FF

8013FoE5 0016

8013FoE7 00FF

8013FoE9 0017

8013FoEB 00FF

8013FoED 0018

SUPER MARIO 64

Unlimited hat usage
813094E6 FFFF

No power gauge
803094E3 0001

Bent Mario
8030961C 0050

Strobe Mario
803094F0 0078

Rubber walls
81309434 FFFF

Crazy camera
81309263 0095

Flat Mario
803094E4 0078

Jumping damages
Mario
803094EC 0078

Die instantly!
803094E2 0078

TOP GEAR RALLY

Only race one lap in
Championship mode
8031EBDB 0002



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64 SCOREZONE

magazine

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Logic
3

Do YOU have what it **TAKES** to beat the **BEST**?



82

PLAY HARD!

WHAT ARE WE AFTER? SAYING YOU'VE BEATEN GERMANY 20-NIL IN FIFA 64 WON'T CUT IT – FOR ALL WE KNOW YOU MIGHT HAVE BEEN PLAYING AGAINST YOUR MATE EAST END ERNIE, WHO STILL HAS A THING ABOUT THE BLITZ AND WAS THUS HELPING OUT WITH THE ODD OWN GOAL. GAMES WHERE A SPECIFIC SCORE (LYLAT WARS) OR TIME (GOLDENEYE, DIDDY KONG RACING) IS GIVEN AT THE END OF A STAGE ARE A BETTER BET.

TO GET THINGS STARTED, THESE ARE GOOD CATEGORIES TO TRY; ANCIENT LAKE IN DIDDY KONG RACING, LUIGI RACEWAY IN MARIO KART 64, BYELOMORYE DAM OR BUNKER 2 IN GOLDENEYE, HOLLYWOOD IN DUKE NUKEM 64, MONACO IN F1 POLE POSITION AND SEASIDE IN TOP GEAR RALLY. YOU CAN OBVIOUSLY ENTER OTHER LEVELS OR OTHER GAMES, BUT THESE ARE SOME OF THE ONES WHERE WE THINK INDIVIDUAL SKILL AND SPEED ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO BE SHOWCASED!

HMM, FOR A HIGH SCORES PAGE there's still a distinct shortage of game-related numbers. What gives? Wither those *Diddy Kong Racing* times? Whence the *Lylat Wars* scores?

Well, hopefully they're on their way. When the ScoreZone was established last issue, our poor aching brains forgot to take into account the fact that our deadline for this issue was truncated by the inconvenient need to get everything done early for Christmas. As a result, issue eight went on sale only a few days before issue nine had to be completed – not nearly enough time for anyone to get their scores in! Rest assured that when your scores arrive, they will be featured right here in the ScoreZone, the only place to be for hardcore N64 gamers! Remember, the person whose videogaming prowess has most impressed us each month will win themselves the award of



Ultimate Player and a Trident Pad and memory card from Logic 3 – and if you include a passport photo of yourself, you may even get to see your gurning mug in the pages of the world's best N64 magazine! Yes, that is us, smart-arse...



Enter The Zone

The first thing to do is to get what you think is an amazing time or score, obviously. But keep your fingers off that joystick – if you then either take a quick snap of the screen or hurriedly slam a video into your VCR to get concrete evidence of your triumph, you're in a position to enter the 64 ScoreZone!

Send your proof to **64 ScoreZone, 64 MAGAZINE, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS**, and our team of ScoreZone minions (Roy) will cast a cynical eye over it. If it passes the test of authenticity, and it's a good enough result, you'll be assured of your place in history! Don't forget to say whether you're using a British (PAL) or foreign (NTSC) machine – suspiciously fast times are less likely to be accepted...

Remember to put your name and address on anything you send to us (if your photo and letter get separated, you're doomed to an eternity in limbo), and if you want them back, make sure you include an SAE.



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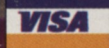
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WHAT?!

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MY EYE!

LUNGE! **LEAP!** **SPLUT!**

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TOP GEAR

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86

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A NICE EASY COURSE FOR BEGINNERS, WHICH LETS YOU GET TO GRIPS WITH THE HANDLING OF YOUR CAR WITHOUT PROVIDING TOO MUCH IN THE WAY OF DIFFICULTY. IT ALSO INTRODUCES YOU TO THE SHORTCUTS – THE FIRST IS FAIRLY OBVIOUS, BUT THE SECOND IS MORE SUBTLE!

5 As you leave the tunnel, there's a hump in the road that pitches fast-moving cars into the air. Make sure you go over it straight-on – if you're at an angle, you can end up crashing into a wall when you land and losing valuable time!



4 This tunnel can be slightly tricky at first, because the sharp left-hand turn often makes you slam into the outside wall. As you approach the tunnel entrance, move to the right side of the road and aim for the inside of the corner.



3 This shortcut is a bit harder to spot, so watch out for the fence on your left as you approach the third corner after exiting the beach shortcut. Go through the gap, then follow the fence up the field to rejoin the road at the top.



2 The first shortcut of the game! As you round the corner and see the beach ahead, you'll also see a gap in the fence. Just drive through it onto the sand, and aim for the end of the cliff ahead to rejoin the road, having cut out a long corner!



1 Not long after the start, the road forks. The left-hand route goes into a tunnel, but it's the right-hand road you should take. The corner may be a little tighter, making it harder for beginners, but hell, you've got to learn sometime – and this way is a lot shorter!



RALLY

JUNGLE

A BLAST THROUGH THE SOUTH AMERICAN RAINFOREST, PAST ANCIENT MAYAN TEMPLES, IS THE CUE TO START GETTING TO GRIPS WITH POWERSLIDING. THE MUDDY TRACKS OFFER A LOT LESS GRIP THAN TARMAC ROADS, SO SET UP YOUR CAR ACCORDINGLY!



5 This whole section of the track runs through swampland. You can cut across the open water, but the loss in speed outweighs any possible time savings. Instead, if you cut the corners as far as the puddles, you can minimise your time through this area.



4 This tunnel is fairly easy, the only tricky bit being the statues that line the walls. If you hit one you'll come to a very sudden stop – so don't hit one!



3 Rather than staying on the road, drivers who head up onto the grass (there's a small ramp to help guide you) can cut several seconds off their time. You can rejoin the road ahead at any point, but be warned that you have to jump down, so make sure you're going in a straight line.



2 Another tunnel leads down to the dirt road. You have a choice of routes at the bottom – go right and join up with the route from the first shortcut, or go straight across and join the main road. Don't go left, as it's a dead end!



1 There are two cunningly-hidden shortcuts past the first corner. The first is reached by going over a small embankment – watch out for the tunnel entrance on your right. At the bottom of the track is a dirt road, which curves around to the right before rejoining the main road.



DESERT

A TRULY ANNOYING COURSE, BECAUSE OF ALL THE BUMPS AND RISES ALONG THE SIDE OF THE NARROW TRACK THAT CAN EASILY FLIP YOUR CAR OVER! IT DOES HAVE THE SAVING GRACE OF THE BEST SHORTCUT IN THE GAME BY MILES, THOUGH. AND SOME BALLOONS.

4 This is an evil bit of track! If you take to the air as you go over a crest in the road, you stand a good chance of smacking into the rock pillar. Even if you miss this, it's still easy to crash into the arch! Either way, you come to a dead stop and have to mess about for ages getting going again.



3 Aah, aren't they nice? Every racing game must have some hot air balloons floating above one of the courses – it's the law!



2 It's the only shortcut on this track, but it's a doozy! After leaving the city and cresting the rise, look out for an old house on the right. A track leads off into the woods – follow it to cut out some very sharp corners. All you have to do is avoid the trees...



1 Coming around this corner after cross the first bridge, you have to be totally accurate with your positioning – too far to the left and you'll clip the kerb and go spinning into the air, too far to the right and you stand a good chance of catching the wall and crashing head-on into the bridge abutment ahead. If in doubt, slow down!



5 Which way to go, which way? Go left. There isn't really much difference between the two distance-wise, but the left route avoids a sharp turn which can slow you down.



MOUNTAIN

THE MOST SCENIC COURSE IN THE GAME, AND ALSO THE MOST HILLY – IT GOES UP AND DOWN LIKE WARREN BEATTY'S ARSE. THERE ARE NO SHORTCUTS AS SUCH, JUST A CHOICE OF ROUTES ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF THE WAY ROUND. THE SHORTEST ROUTE OF THIS HIGHLAND FLING IS, AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT, THE MOST DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE...



5 Another steep hill, though not as bad as the shortcut. Again, keep your speed down until you've passed under the bridge to minimise your chances of hitting the sides.



4 This muddy track is about the steepest road in the game. Careful use of the brakes is essential if you're to negotiate it without hitting the sides. Don't be tempted to put the hammer down when you emerge – there's a hump just past the exit which will send you into a wall!



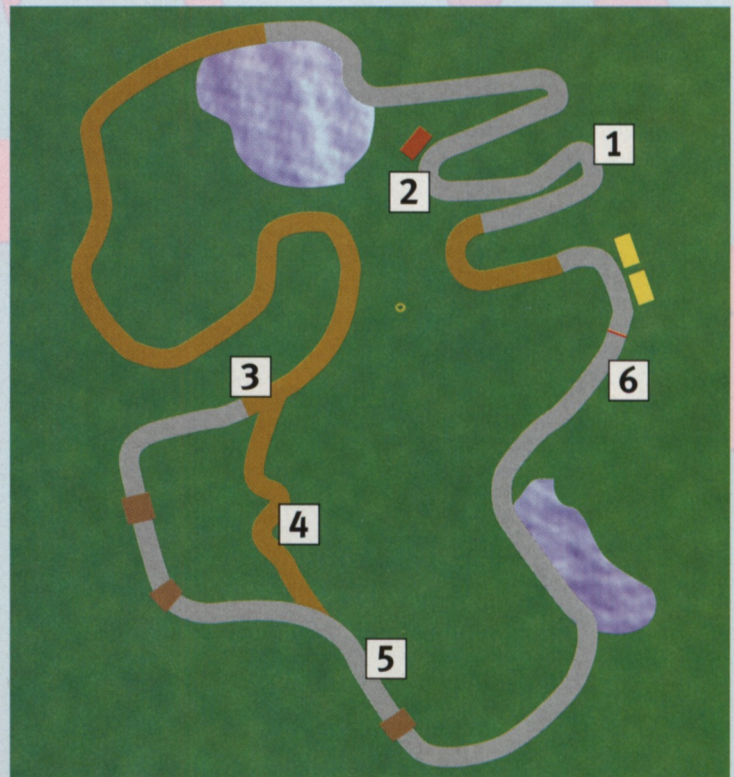
3 Here's where you have a choice of routes. Going right is easier, and lets you get up to a very high speed, but is considerably longer than the other road. The left route, however, is incredibly steep, and if you're not 100% accurate with your steering you'll clip the side and take a flying lesson!



2 Another hairpin, this one with a motel conveniently located right on the turn. It's a good job that barrier's strong, otherwise it'd be a drive-through!



6 Just before you cross the finish line, there's this tricky little chicane to get through. It might not look like much, but it's easy to misjudge the last corner and hit the barriers!



1 This is just the first of many hairpins you'll encounter on this track. Skilful powersliding can get you round with little or no loss of speed, but in Championship mode other cars are often taking up the best line, so watch out!

STRIP MINE

THIS SECRET TRACK, AVAILABLE ONLY TO EITHER SUPREME RACERS OR DIRTY CHEATS, IS THE BIGGEST IN THE GAME, AND ALSO HAS THE LARGEST CHOICE OF ROUTES THROUGH IT. IT'S NOT SOMEWHERE YOU'D WANT TO GO FOR A HOLIDAY, BEING A FILTHY INDUSTRIAL ZONE WITH DOCKS AND POWER PLANTS, BUT IT MAKES FOR A TOUGH CHALLENGE!

7 If you took the right-hand road at the first junction, you can still get into the tunnel when you see this crane by cutting across the sand and heading to its left. Otherwise go straight ahead to reach the docks and the aircraft carrier.



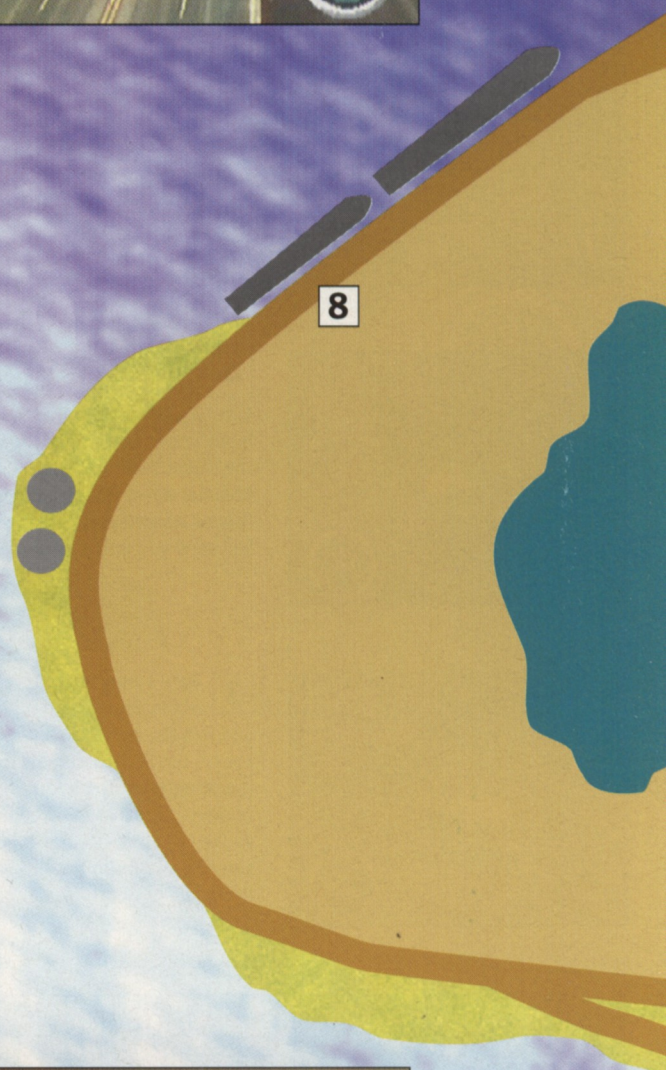
6 What an incredible smell you've discovered! The sewer actually has two levels, one above the other – a ramp propels you to the upper deck if you're going fast enough. The only difference is that the upper level is slightly less waterlogged, so you can go that little bit faster.



5 At several points through these bends, the route splits into a high road and a low road. Most of the time it doesn't matter which you take (the low road is shorter, but the turn is sharper), but on this one it's always best to go high, as you don't have to drive between the tracks of this monster JCB!



8 There's a jump on the right-hand lane of the dock road as you pass the cargo ship. Pointless but fun, so why not go for it?



4 There's a second shortcut right after the first, but it involves making a very tight turn! By cutting across another strip of sand, you can avoid a couple of annoying hairpins.

Top Gear Rally

9 When you see these bulldozers, you have a fast decision to make – go left down the narrow detour, or weave between them and head along the bumpy road under construction? They both emerge just before the garage, so it's up to you!



10 Another huge dumptruck waits in front of you, but this one blocks the road. You can either veer right onto the beach and avoid it, or do some stunt driving and go between its wheels. Be warned – if you screw this up, you'll have to reverse out and go onto the sand anyway, so get it right first time!



1 This giant dumptruck marks your first choice of route. Going left takes you through two tight corners towards the tunnel, going right takes you to the dockside either by a quarry or the sewers. Hmm, fragrant!

2 After emerging from the tunnel, this raised bridge can catch you unawares. As usual with jumps, make sure to hit it straight-on so you don't spin in mid-air.



3 Once you pass the grim walls of the inland dock, you can cut across this sandy area to save time. Watch out for the bulldozer, and be prepared for the very tight corner once you leave the sand.



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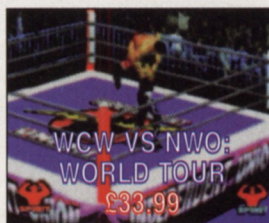


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- Well, it's sold out, but you could have read about *Mario 64* and *Wave Race*. Alas, you can't any more.

ISSUE 2

- Starfox*! *Blast Corps*! *Turok*! Complete *Turok* guide! The *Mario 64* and *Shadows Of The Empire* solutions begin!

ISSUE 3 - SOLD OUT

- Mission: Impossible*! *ISS 64*! *Blast Corps* complete solution! The horror that is *Kabuki Jo*! All gone, unfortunately.

ISSUE 4

- Banjo-Kazooie*! *Conker's Quest*! *Goldeneye*! *F-Zero 64*! *Go! Go!* *Troublemakers*! *Mario Kart 64* guide!

ISSUE 5

- Extreme G*! Behind the scenes of *Goldeneye*! *MRC*! *Goemon*! *Lylat Wars* review and players' guide!

ISSUE 6 - SOLD OUT

- Duke Nukem 64*! Part one of the *Goldeneye* solution! Game clichés! All popular, hence gone.

ISSUE 7

- Diddy Kong Racing*! *Top Gear Rally*! *Duke Nukem*! Plus the full guide to *Mischief Makers*!

ISSUE 8

- That'd be *Mortal Kombat Mythologies*, the last part of *Goldeneye*, *FIFA '98* and *Automobili Lamborghini*, then.



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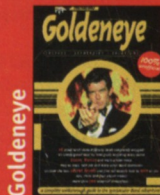
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64 NINDEX

magazine

The Nindex is the **AUTHORITATIVE** guide to N64 **GAMES** – every game we've **REVIEWED** is in here. The scores for games from **EARLIER** issues have now been **UPDATED** to reflect the passage of **TIME** and the arrival of **NEWER** titles. This is the only buyer's guide you'll ever **NEED**!

AUTOMOBILI LAMBORGHINI

Publisher: THE Games
Reviewed: Issue 8

Decent enough stab at a high-speed racer with expensive sports cars, though it doesn't quite provide the feeling of blasting around at zoomph. The colours make everything look rather bland too.

81
percent

BAKU BOMBERMAN

Publisher: Hudson Soft
Reviewed: Issue 7

Bomberman hits the third dimension, and the multi-player game suffers as a result. However, the one-player game is improved dramatically, being a clever and enthralling mix of puzzles, action and big explosions!

81
percent

CLAYFIGHTER 63 1/3

Publisher: Interplay
Reviewed: Issue 8

Eeurrgh! The N64's worst game by a mile, a shamefully shabby beat-'em-up which is as much fun as having teeth pulled.

13
percent

BLAST CORPS

Publisher: Nintendo
Reviewed: Issue 3

An excellent combination of racing game, shoot-'em-up and nerve-scraping puzzler. Try to prevent a nuclear disaster by safely guiding a runaway missile carrier through each level – by destroying everything in its path! Addictive fun, but not that long-lasting.

82
percent

CRUIS'N USA

Publisher: GT Interactive
Reviewed: Issue 1 (import)

Absolutely pathetic attempt at a racing game, redeemed only by... well, nothing, actually. It's utter rubbish, but terrifyingly isn't the worst game out on the N64.

25
percent

DARK RIFT

Publisher: Vic Tokai
Reviewed: Issue 4 (import)

A beat-'em-up which looks extremely nice (with 60 frame per second graphics) but plays like a compendium of every other fighter ever written, so is rather dull. Nothing special.

57
percent

DIDDY KONG RACING

Publisher: Nintendo
Reviewed: Issue 7

Making *Mario Kart 64* instantly redundant, *Diddy Kong Racing* is a superb combination of racer and adventure pitting everyone's favourite chimp against the evil Wizpig. Just as good as a one-player experience as it is for full-on multi-player racing mayhem!

95
percent



DOOM 64

Publisher: GT Interactive

Reviewed: Issue 1 (import)
Graphically upgraded but otherwise unsurprising update of the aging PC classic. Fun for a while, but looks very old hat when compared to games like *Turok* and *Goldeneye*.

80
percent

DORAEMON

Publisher: Epoch

Reviewed: Issue 3 (import)
The first (but undoubtedly not the last) *Mario 64* clone, which plays almost identically to the Nintendo game, except not as well. Loads of Japanese text and extreme easiness hinder playability.

40
percent

DUKE NUKEM 64

Publisher: GT Interactive
Reviewed: Issue 7

Steroid-packed conversion of the classic PC shooter, with a rock-hard hero ridding the world of babenapping alien scum. Although the graphics aren't as good as *Goldeneye*, the excellent gameplay is still there.

90
percent

EXTREME G

Publisher: Acclaim
Reviewed: Issue 7

Insanely fast futuristic racer, where tooled-

91
percent



up bikes battle it out over a series of high-tech rollercoaster courses. Easily a match for PlayStation *Wipeout*, with the added bonus of multi-player battle games!



F1 POLE POSITION

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Reviewed: Issue 6

An update of *Human Grand Prix* (qv), with improved graphics and an official F1 licence that banishes Hamon Dill forever! It plays well enough and has a lot of depth, but may be a little on the arcadey side for hardcore F1 fanatics.

78
percent

FIFA 64

Publisher: EA Sports
Reviewed: Issue 2

Completely awful football game that is kicked off the field by Konami's *ISS 64*, yet still became a best-seller purely on the strength of its name. You *can* fool some of the people all the time.

25
percent



GANBARE GOEMON

Publisher: Konami

Featured: Issue 5 (import)
Wild and wacky follow-up to the popular Super NES series of *Goemon* games, which in its current form suffers from a lack of action and a surfeit of Japanese text which makes puzzle solving all but impossible.

70
percent

THE GLORY OF ST ANDREWS

Publisher: Seta

Reviewed: Issue 3 (import)
Deeply unpleasant golf game with terrible controls and graphics that would have looked embarrassing on an NES.

20
percent

GO! GO! TROUBLEMAKERS

Japanese version of *Mischief Makers* (qv).

80
percent

GOLDENEYE

Publisher: Nintendo
Featured: Issue 5 (import)

An absolutely superb title which takes first-person games to a new level, and also lets you relieve your bloodlust into the bargain! Bond is back in a game that showcases what the N64 is really capable of.

96
percent

HABU SHOGI

Publisher: Seta

Featured: Issue 3 (import)
Shogi is a variation on chess, but since we don't know the rules and the text is in Japanese, reviewing this would be a meaningless and futile action.

N/A

HEXEN

Publisher: GT Interactive
Reviewed: Issue 4

Extremely dodgy *Doom*-style game in a Dungeons & Dragons vein, with spectacularly inept use of the N64's graphical powers and trudgesome gameplay.

45
percent

HUMAN GRAND PRIX

Outdated version of *F1 Pole Position 64* (qv).

50
percent



ISS 64

Publisher: Konami
Reviewed: Issue 3

93
percent

Still the finest football game we've seen on any format! It's good as a one-player game, and absolutely awesome when all four pads are plugged in at once. Over the moon, Saint!

J-LEAGUE DYNAMITE SOCCER

Publisher: Imagineer
Reviewed: Issue 6 (import)

50
percent

Up against the mighty *ISS 64*, this is like pitting a Sunday League team against Man United. Despite some neat touches, it's hard to play because you're never sure which player you're controlling – and everyone's a midget!

J-LEAGUE PERFECT STRIKER

Japanese version of *ISS 64* (qv).

93
percent

JOHN MADDEN 64

Publisher: EA Sports
Reviewed: Issue 8

80
percent

The N64's second American football game, and one which is visually lacking compared to *Quarterback Club's* hi-res graphics. It plays much the same though, so it's down to whether you want an official NFL licence or not.

KILLER INSTINCT GOLD

Publisher: Nintendo
Reviewed: Issue 3

70
percent

An insanely fast beat-'em-up which for a long time was the best the N64 had to offer, and still isn't that bad.



LYLAT WARS/STARFOX 64

Publisher: Nintendo
Reviewed: Issue 2 (import)

94
percent

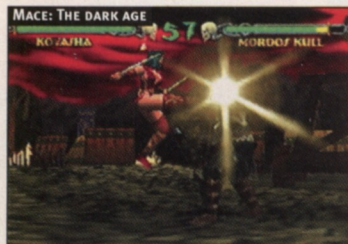
Spectacular shoot-'em-up which really shows off what the N64 can do when it's pushed. Those who've played *Starfox/Starwing* on the Super NES might have a feeling of déjà vu in play, but it's still tremendous fun.



MACE: THE DARK AGE

Publisher: Midway

76
percent



Reviewed: Issue 7

Currently the best beat-'em-up on the N64, *Mace* has more than enough combos, power moves, oversized weapons and female fighters with not much on to keep fans of the genre happy until *Street Fighter* arrives next year.

MAHJONG MASTER

Publisher: Konami

Featured: Issue 3 (import)

If you A: don't know the rules of Mahjong, and B: don't know Japanese, there's no point whatsoever buying this game.

N/A

MAHJONG 64

Publisher: Koei

Featured: Issue 3 (import)

As with Konami's Mahjong game, this is likely to have an extremely limited appeal in the UK (we reckon, oh, two people might be interested), hence the lack of a review.

N/A

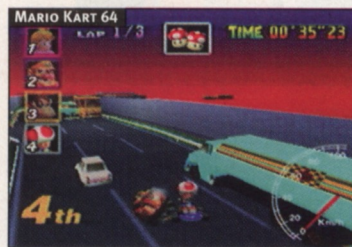
MARIO KART 64

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 3

Fun but flawed follow-up to the classic SNES racer, now outmatched in all respects by *Diddy Kong Racing*.

80
percent



MISCHIEF MAKERS

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 7

The English translation of *Go! Go! Troublemakers* (qv), and made much easier to understand in the process. Although it's a 2-D platformer, it has enough depth, variety and clever touches to hold the interest.

85
percent

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

Publisher: GT Interactive

Reviewed: Issue 3

A kick in the nuts for the once unstoppable *MK* franchise with this update too far, which really shows the age of the original game.

55
percent

MULTI RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Publisher: Ocean

Reviewed: Issue 5

The N64's first attempt at a realistic racing game, which falls short in most areas by being slow and way too easy.

62
percent

NBA HANGTIME

Publisher: Midway

Reviewed: Issue 2 (import)

Mediocre basketball game which looks very similar to the Super NES's *NBA Jam*, but doesn't play as well. The four-player mode provides some brief fun, but nothing that lasts.

58
percent

NFL QUARTERBACK CLUB '98

Publisher: Acclaim

Reviewed: Issue 7

An engrossing and highly detailed

80
percent

American football simulation, with everything that should be needed to keep a gridiron fan happy.

PILOTWINGS 64

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 1

A game which divided opinion – some were entranced by its freeform airborne gameplay and realistic flight handling, while others thought it lacked focus and was too 'drifty'. For those who get into it, there's plenty to do, and it looks superb.

79
percent

POWERFUL PRO BASEBALL 64

Publisher: Konami

Featured: Issue 3 (import)

Given baseball's lack of popularity in Britain and the enormous amount of Japanese options, we thought we'd hold off on reviewing this until an American conversion appears...

N/A

PRO BASEBALL KING

Publisher: Imagineer

Featured: Issue 3 (import)

Again, as with Konami's baseball game, we decided it wouldn't be fair to review this until a comprehensible version appears.

N/A

PUYO PUYO SUN 64

Publisher: Compile

Reviewed: Issue 8 (import)

So it looks dated because the graphics haven't improved over the old SNES and Mega Drive versions. Big deal – it's enormous fun to play, and unbeatable fun as a two-player game!

87
percent

SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 1

Clunky *Star Wars* tie-in which throws together assorted sub-games, a couple of which are good but most aren't. One of the N64's earliest games, and looking it.

62
percent



SUPER MARIO 64

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 1

The N64's first game, and for a long time the only one which showed off the machine's true abilities. The fact that it took us four issues to print the full solution shows just how much there is to do! A genuine classic.

95
percent

TETRISPHERE

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 5 (import)

A pseudo 3-D variation on the classic falling block puzzle, where matching blocks have to be grouped on the surface of a sphere. It gets more addictive as it goes on, but isn't a match for the Game Boy original.

75
percent



TOP GEAR RALLY

Publisher: THE Games

Reviewed: Issue 7

The most realistic racer on the N64 to date, *Top Gear Rally* combines realistic car handling with huge courses and a wealth of secrets to discover to create the ultimate rally experience.

90
percent



TUROK: DINOSAUR HUNTER

Publisher: Acclaim

Reviewed: Issue 2

Considering the title, there's a marked shortage of dinosaurs in this game! *Turok* is a souped-up *Doom*, with lush graphics and OTT gore, but the promise of the early levels eventually deteriorates into lots of wandering around mazes. Good but not great.

72
percent

WAVE RACE 64

Publisher: Nintendo

Reviewed: Issue 1

Enjoyable jetski simulation with superbly controllable craft, which is let down by a very third-rate PAL conversion and a price which now looks inflated.

87
percent

WAYNE GRETZKY'S 3-D HOCKEY

Publisher: GT Interactive

Reviewed: Issue 2 (import)

The title tells you all you need to know about the game type, but how does it play? Not bad at all, actually, the N64's analogue controller being ideal for this kind of game.

84
percent

WAR GODS

Publisher: Midway (import)

Reviewed: Issue 3 (import)

This pathetic excuse for a beat-'em-up is based on *Mortal Kombat*, only in 3-D. And boy, does it bite, as the Americans might say. The fighters are some of the most stupid yet, and it plays like a one-legged pig with a broken ankle.

52
percent

WONDER PROJECT J2

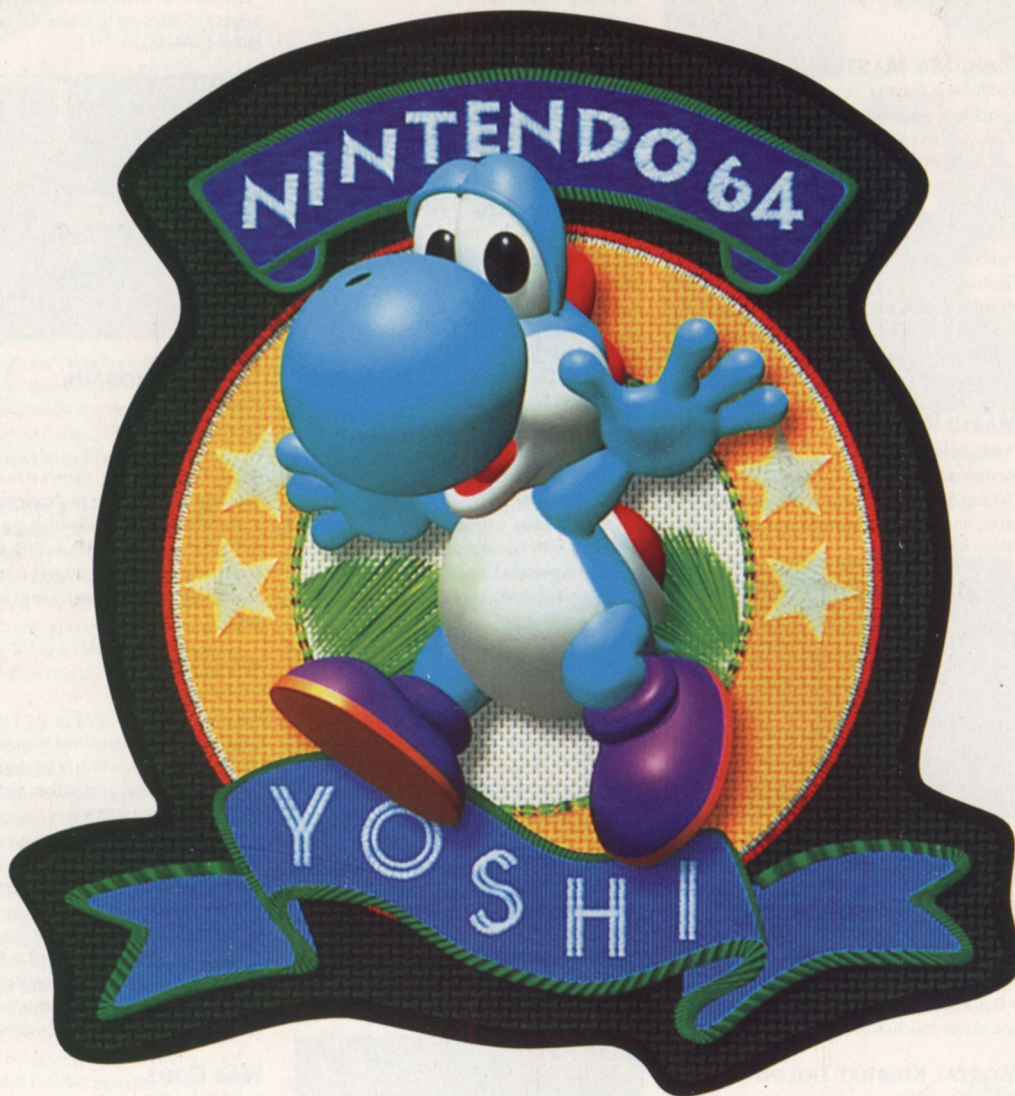
Publisher: Enix

Featured: Issue 3 (import)

The premise is intriguing – a 'virtual life' game where you have to guide a young android girl into making the right decisions in life – but it relies heavily on Japanese text. Which we can't read.

N/A

The Nindex will be updated every month to provide you with the most accurate buying information you can find for N64 games!



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Dead pool this month: Roy's CD collection, people who get into a strop for no good reason

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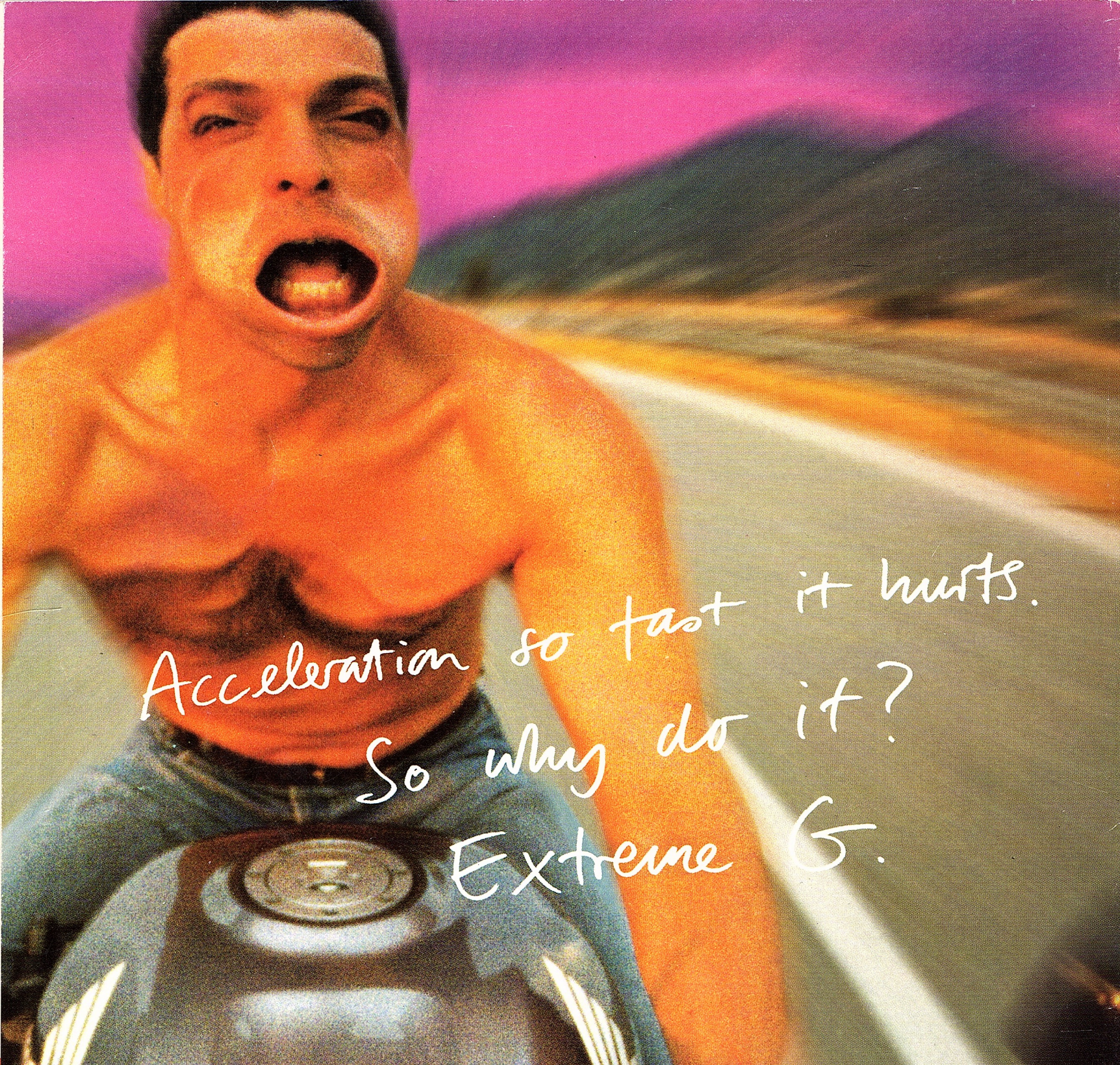
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